NEW STATESMAN
SOCIETY

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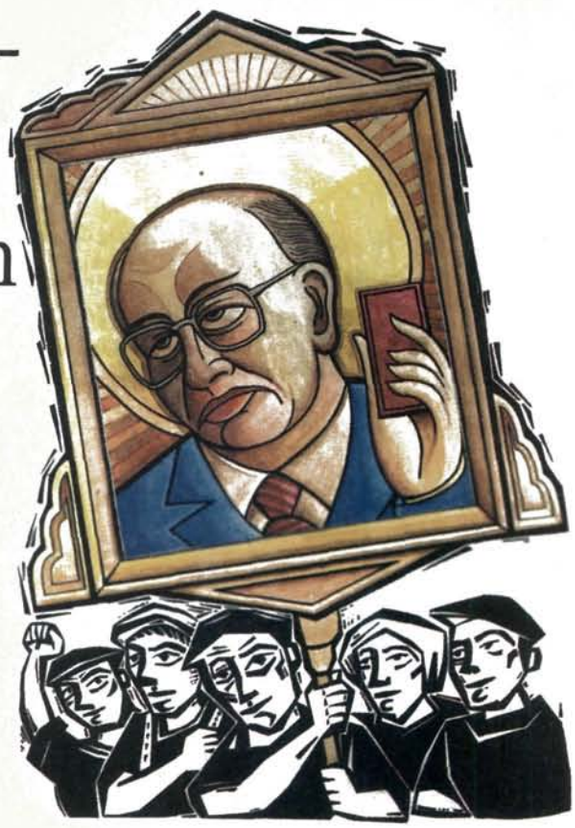
Beginning again

Nial Abdulin, 32, a Soviet power worker, was asked: 'What, if anything, will be different in your life when the Moscow conference is over?' He replied with a single word: 'Hope'. But hope is a dangerous substance...



Alexander Cockburn on the Iranian Airbus atrocity

The verdict on Cleveland

Patrick Wright on the revival of British art

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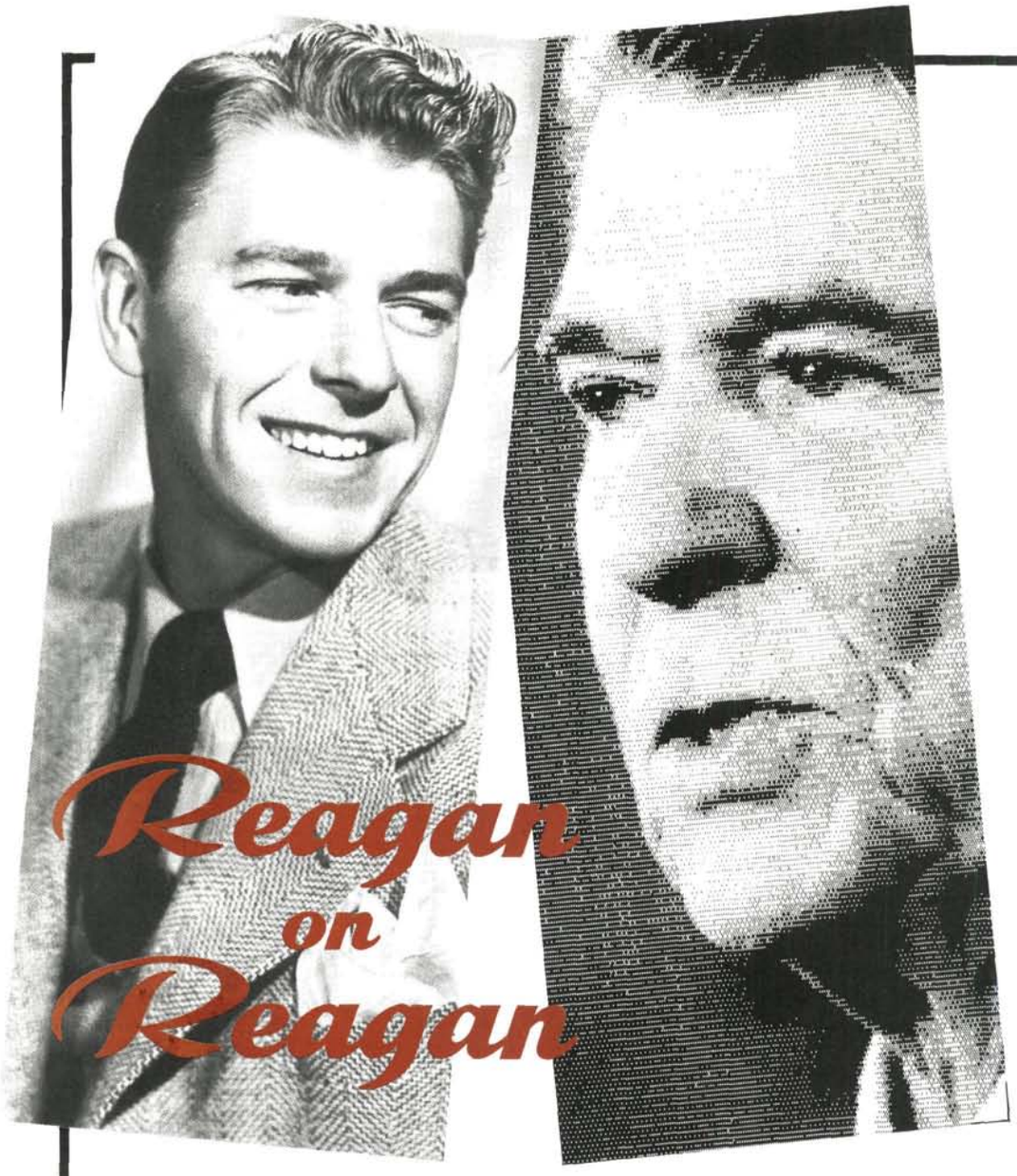

Reagan on Reagan

Featuring
Ronald and Nancy Reagan in their own words, Maureen Reagan, Olivia de Havilland, Tom Foley, Caspar Weinberger, George Shultz, Donald Regan, David Stockman, Daniel P. Moynihan, Michael Deaver, Garry Wills and many more.

Reporter Godfrey Hodgson
Music Matthew Scott
Series Associate Producer Marsh Marshall
Producers Mike Dormer and Kathy O'Neil
Executive Producer Phillip Whitehead

"I guess I'm most proud of the change in attitude on the part of the people, and evident among our young men . . . I came here with a mission I took up with the military, as to how to restore a pride in the uniform." (Ronald Reagan)

"There has been a kind of leakage of reality in this decade. A sense that reality was an illusion that could be overcome." (Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan)

Programme 1: The All-American
Friday 8th July at 8.15pm

Programme 2: Walking Tall
Friday 15th July at 8.15pm

Programme 3: Legacy
Friday 22nd July at 8.15pm

A Brook Production for Channel 4

Post-production at the Palace

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Cover illustration: Cliff Harper

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CAMPAIGN DIARY

A Labour councillor in the northeast was wishing me well in the leadership campaign. We discussed the length of the campaign—more than double the length of a general election. "But yours are longer," I pointed out. He replied, "Longer? In the Labour Party the leadership election goes on all the time." Labour's current leadership election certainly has a capacity to wipe ours off the front pages, and shows distinctly less restraint than we have so far achieved. I shall not forget Roy Hattersley's extraordinary comment that John Prescott's decision to stand would cost the Labour Party money which the union would now have to spend asking its members how the block votes should be cast. The unspoken assumption was that they would have been under no obligation to ask their members whether or not to cast the block vote for Eric Heffer, who had already declared himself a candidate.

One of the stranger features of a leadership election campaign is to read supposedly in-depth analyses of my personality and attributes written by commentators who, to my certain knowledge, have never met me. What almost all of these scribes do is to thumb through the same reference book—the redoubtable Andrew Roth's *Parliamentary Profiles*. I must have seen the description "earnest, bustling...anti-drinking, anti-smoking, anti-porn" under at least two dozen different bylines. My greatest regret is that they all have the current edition of the book. An earlier edition credited me with a Danish wife. This was always rather difficult to explain to my unmistakably English wife, but the fun of seeing the same mistake repeated throughout the national and regional press would have made it all worth it.

Talking of the press, Brian Walden can be relied upon to incur my wrath. He has the cheek, from his Channel Islands retreat, to advise members of my party how to vote in the leadership election. The basis of his advice is that they should choose the candidate he thinks will direct the most fire against the Labour Party while doing as little damage as possible to the Conservatives. He would, wouldn't he? He is now a love-struck Thatcherite whose only interest in us is to minimise the damage we could do to his heroine and her party. And that coming from a man who, at a time when we were voting against the loonier actions of the Wilson government, was trooping through the lobbies in support of them.

I hate leisure centres—not when used for the activities for which they were designed, but when they are pressed into service for plays, concerts, and party meetings. Who ever imagined that a vast, echoing gymnasium was suitable for any of these functions? Give me a town hall, a theatre or a galleried chapel any day. But it was into Rushmoor Leisure Centre in Farnborough that 500 local Social and Liberal Democrats filed to hear an extraordinary speech-making marathon by the two leadership candidates and three candidates for the party presidency. The trouble was that they couldn't hear for much of the time—even an elaborate public address system could not compensate for the incompatibilities of gymnastics and politics. None of this deterred the vast crowd from sticking it out to the finish of what was in all other respects a superbly organised event—it was a sure sign that our party is quite genuinely strong and in good heart.

Benoit Jacques

Alan Beith MP

At this, as at other "hustings"—and we are having about ten of them—I have begun to muse on the fact that these events do not test many of the qualities required for party leadership. Obviously, no public speaking contest tests qualities such as judgment and commitment, and no one expects them to. But nor do they test the two key elements in the public speaking a leader has to do. Often a leader speaks as the main, or only, speaker to a party audience, and the test is whether he can inspire them—that is probably best judged at an individual meeting which each candidate is holding.

One of a Leader's other main duties is to debate with the party's opponents, either in the Commons or in the television studio. This is the second thing that the internal hustings meeting does not test, because the debate is a necessarily restrained exchange between different presentations of the same party view. A shared objective of increasing the party's overall success has discouraged negative point-scoring between the candidates. Perhaps one should attempt to lure leading members of the other parties to appear as sparring partners at these events. But how big a fee would they charge, I wonder? Perhaps it could be carried out on a reciprocal basis, particularly if one can ever manage to induce the other parties to hold one-person one-vote elections. In their absence they take on a distinctly unnatural character unrelated to the *real* political world.

At the beginning of the campaign I said that the press caricatures would give the impression that this election was being fought between Colonel Oliver North and John Wesley, neither of whom is in fact standing. The remark was widely quoted and the stereotyping has continued. On two occasions since then I have been asked by TV interviewers: "Do you agree with the contest between Colonel Oliver North and John Wesley?" As Wesley would have reminded us, cast your bread upon the water and it will return after many days—but in a rather soggy state.

ROGER WODDIS

Get well soon

"Look to your health...and value it next to a good conscience; for health is the second blessing that we mortals are capable of; a blessing that money cannot buy."—Isaac Walton

Walton was hooked on the priorities,
And knew good health to be the common wish.
If he were facing our authorities,
The last thing he would talk about is fish.

Salute the service in its fortieth year:
Health is a blessing money cannot buy—
But what's that graveyard growling that we hear?
Keep calm, my darlings—that's Revolving Nye.

"Safe in our hands"—a boast beyond belief—
Safe as a broken back beyond repair.
It's only right the low should lack relief,
And higher mortals have expensive care.

Those doctors must be followers of Marx
Who think a billion pounds would keep us well.
With private swimming baths and private parks,
Why shouldn't sickness be a private hell?

Walton! thou shouldst be living at this hour:
Britain, her lifeblood drained, hath need of thee.
Matron, who has no conscience, is in power,
And she is putting arsenic in the tea.

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EDITORIAL

Trust the people

Douglas Hurd's reform of the Official Secrets Act preserves secrecy in the heart of the state

Nigel Paige

This is a government which doesn't trust its people. It is led by a Prime Minister who denies the very existence of society and who has with remarkable consistency acted to reduce the autonomy of the institutions of society, like local authorities, universities, schools, and the BBC. Her government passes laws which interfere in the private spheres of society (from how we should think about sexuality and religion to absurd rules about the use of video cassettes) and sets up new bodies to regulate our pleasures. And now, awkwardly posing as reforms, come proposals which deny our rights as citizens to judge what we may know about how we are governed.

Douglas Hurd's white paper on official secrets law is presented as a "liberalising" measure. Yet at the outset it deliberately rejects the Freedom of Information framework within which any restrictions on public access to official information should be set. "That," it roundly declares, "is a separate issue." And so, if the government has its way, the governing presupposition of the British state will not be *glasnost*, but secrecy. It's common ground that section 2 of the Official Secrets Act 1911 is inefficient and archaic; but Hurd's "reform", while ruthlessly efficient, preserves a wilfully archaic notion of democracy.

Let's get to the core of Hurd's pretensions to liberal reform. Hurd has abandoned the government's original proposal that ministers should be empowered to issue certificates determining the injury to the national interest caused by any disclosures of official secrets. Such certificates would have been unchallengeable in legal proceedings. Instead, says Hurd, juries will decide.

So far, so good? Not at all. For Hurd has slapped down a built-in government certificate which rules that disclosures in a whole class of policy areas, or by security officials and "designated" civil servants, are by their very nature harmful to the national interest. These areas go wider than the traditional concerns of security and intelligence work to information obtained in confidence from other governments or international bodies. In such cases, there will be no defence. Indeed, Hurd specifically rules out the defence of public interest, which Richard Shepherd's recent private member's bill made available where, for example, disclosures reveal iniquity; and he restricts the defence of "prior publication", where information has already been disclosed, either in the United Kingdom or elsewhere.

These proposals mean, for example, that no jury would have had the opportunity to find Clive Ponting, the civil servant who leaked official documents showing how Michael Heseltine had misled the House of Commons over the sinking of the *Belgrano* two years earlier, not guilty of harming the national interest. Pontings's disclosures would be doubly criminal under Hurd's new provisions and the defence of public interest which the Ponting jury accepted would be unavailable. Similarly, no jury would be free to judge the supposed harm done by the former MI5 official Cathy Massiter's revelations of the widespread abuse of telephone taps by the intelligence services. Those revelations, too, would in the future be doubly ruled off; yet the government shrank from prosecuting Ms Massiter because it knew damn well that no jury would convict.

Juries will, it is true, be able to decide how much harm has been done in a large number of less central cases, and a whole range of disclosures—from Hurd's tea bags in the Home Office to politically embarrassing leaks of Kenneth Baker's cabinet memos— will no longer be criminal at all. But Hurd will give government the power to make disclosures in the most significant areas of the state's operations indelibly criminal. The national interest in these areas is not to be judged by society at large, but by the government of the day at best, and by the secret state at worst. New internal processes are in place to keep watch over possible iniquities within the state. And yet we already know from the state's behaviour during John Stalker's investigations of the alleged "shoot-to-kill" in Northern Ireland, and from the official reaction to Peter Wright's allegations of lawlessness and treason within MI5, that neither government nor the state apparatus are fit guardians of democracy in such matters.

The judge in the Ponting trial directed the jury that the interests of the state were to be equated with those of the government of the day: "We have general elections in this country. The majority party in the House of Commons forms the government." Mrs Thatcher's government takes that view further: a parliamentary majority, however obtained, represents democracy. The Ponting jury, in taking its own view of the national interest, also asserted a wider view of democracy.

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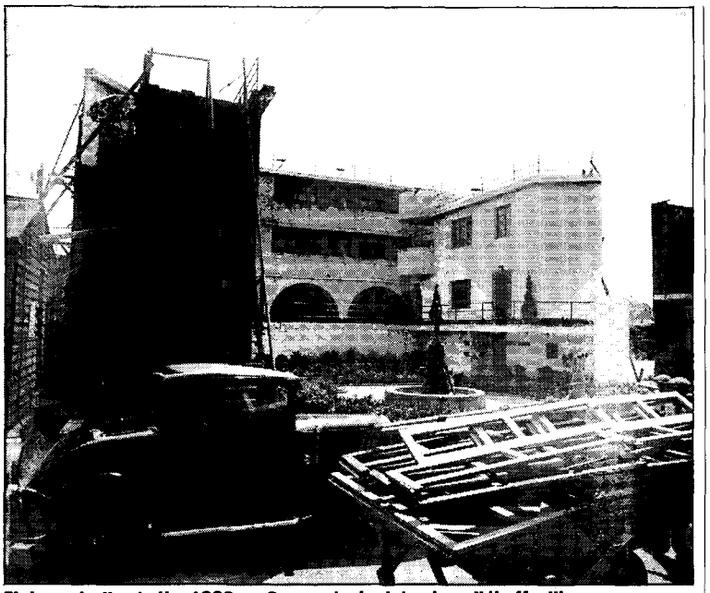

Hulton Picture Library

Elstree studios in the 1930s—Cannon's decision to sell it off will remove a vital part of the British film industry's production base

DTI turns blind eye to movie sale

Last week's sale by Cannon of their Elstree studios virtually under cover of darkness to an unnamed bidder (almost certainly a property company) is the latest chapter in what the *Evening Standard*'s Alexander Walker has described as "the disgraceful, shameful, shabby story" of the company's involvement in the British film industry. It also makes a nonsense of former Industry Secretary Paul Channon's assurance, when he turned down a referral of the group's affairs to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, that the DTI would keep an eye on its UK interests.

In 1986 the Australian industrialist Alan Bond acquired all of Thorn EMI's (TESE) assets, including Elstree studios and the ABC cinema chain for $165 million. A week later Cannon bought the whole package from Bond for $266 million. The Office of Fair Trading recommended that the takeover be referred to the Monopolies Commission but to its surprise its recommendation was overruled by the Industry Secretary Paul Channon. Critics of the deal (including the *New Statesman*, 30 May 1986) argued, among other things, that if Cannon got into financial difficulties it might indulge in an asset stripping operation in Britain.

This is precisely what has happened. The interest on the money paid to Bond, a series of flops at the box office and the damaging effects of a US Securities and Exchange Commission investigation into its accounting practices have all combined to bring the company close to the financial brink on occasion. The company has sold off the film library it inherited from TESE to the American Weintraub Entertainment Group. This includes the Pathe Newsreel library, the Ealing classics, the *Carry On* series, *A Passage to India* and some 2,000 other titles. Again, calls for this sale to be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission—in the Lords and elsewhere—fell on deaf ears.

Cannon's continuing financial problems forced it last October into a complex deal in which it sold Elstree, its cinema holdings and its Los Angeles headquarters to the Spanish property company Renta Immobiliaria, and then leased them back again.

Cinemas and film studios alike are worth more as real estate. An industry buyer for Elstree could certainly have been found, but at what price? Last year Cannon offered Elstree to Weintraub for $25 million, so it will be instructive to compare this with the price paid by last week's mystery buyer (rumoured to be around $60 million).

Of course, no one would pretend that this is a good time for British studios. But Cannon's precipitate action means that if an up-turn comes there will be one less major studio, and that a vital part of the British production base has gone forever.

Despite the DTI's promise, not a squeak of concern has been heard from that quarter in the past two years and no doubt the silence will continue. *Julian Petley*

Labour's rates alternative

A Labour government would replace the poll tax with a property tax based on capital values and a local income tax linked to PAYE. The formula has been approved by Labour's local government committee and is now expected to have a smooth passage through the national executive at the end of July before going to the party conference in Blackpool in October.

Jack Cunningham, the shadow enviroment secretary, and the team which drew up the new policy reassert that Labour's campaign against the poll tax must stay within the law concentrating public attention on the shortcomings of the poll tax and not on the illegal action of Labour councils.

The paper's recommendations include: a property tax based on its capital value with up to 100 per cent rebates; the balance of the local taxation to be made up though local income tax "directly related to ability to pay"; and a return to the business rate as a local tax, but with rebates for small businesses.

Rate and poll tax capping would go. At several points, the team insists that local authorities must have their own sources of income, and power to make their own decisions. "In our view that right is inherent in the nature of local government."

The team also propose changes to the rate support grant system, stopping the reductions in government grant and introducing a rolling programme for the Rate Support Grant settlements to allow councils to plan ahead. By making the criteria for assessment more flexible the needs of groups like the elderly would be more easily met.

But Cunningham is not offering to rescue local authorities who are heavily in debt. He plans that a Labour government should pay half the cost of local services and the local council should find the rest. Extra investment cash would follow once capital receipts from the sale of council houses and other property are freed from Treasury control.

Additional capital financing would be available through the Public

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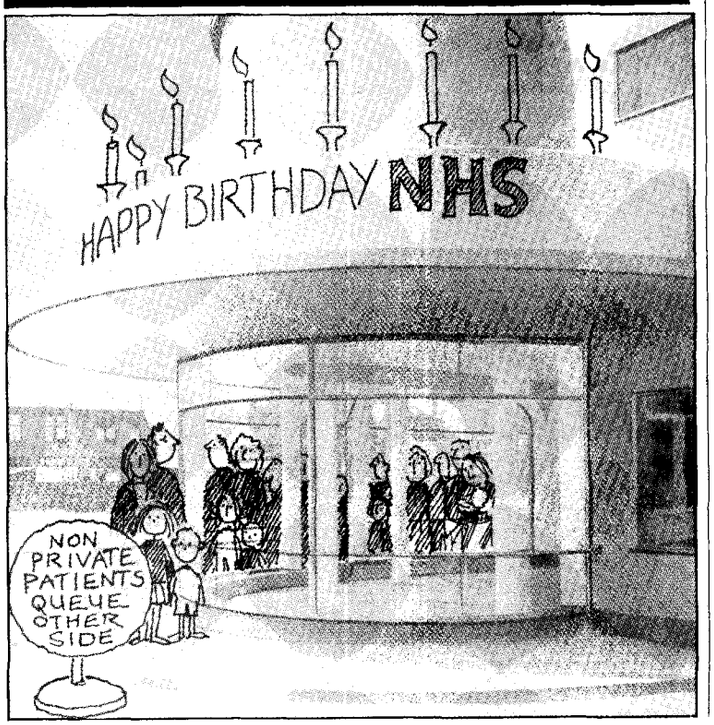

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Works Loans Board at reduced interest rates and councils could raise capital in the money market.

The reformed property tax based on capital value (rather than notional rentable value as with rates) will be regularly updated. The paper stresses that this does not mean that if the value of a house goes up by 50 per cent, the tax bill will go up by the same. Capital values will be used only to distribute the level of taxation within areas.

The local income tax which would operate alongside the property tax would be progressive and also bring in a modest increase in the number of people contributing directly to local government. The proportion of local revenue to be raised by each method would be set by central government.

Still to be decided is which tier or tiers of local and regional government should be able to raise local tax, whether there should be relief from the local income tax and which method of collecting local tax is best. *John Lewis*

Bousquet bites the bullet

When Ann Holmes defeated Ben Bousquet to become the Labour party candidate for the Kensington by-election there was much astonishment. Bousquet, a popular local councillor, had increased the Labour vote against regional and national trends as the defeated candidate in 1983 and 1987. Indeed in 1987 even the Conservative victor, the late Sir Brandon Rhys Williams predicted "Ben Bousquet will be the next MP in Kensington and he will be a marvellous MP."

Following his deselection it was no surprise therefore when a chant of "racist" was taken up. Black sections chair Narendra Makanji said: "The Kensington Labour party lost its bottle and gave its support to a 'safe' candidate. I would say Bousquet's colour was probably the main factor."

In Kensington itself many of the black voters who make up 10 per cent of the local electorate were of a similar opinion. As one elderly West Indian resident put it: "I never had any doubt that the Labour party would take this seat away from Ben the moment he made it winnable for them."

But not only is there no evidence of any interference from the national Labour Party, there is every indication that Bousquet carried the backing of the party leadership. Of course, no one can account for the individual motivations behind the votes cast by the selection committee but the key factors appear to have been the performance of the candidates on the night and the internal politics of the CLP.

Bousquet's performance, say those present, was unusually hesistant. He admits as much himself. What he had not told anyone was that he had learned of the death of a close relative only six hours before. Understandably his speech that night lacked lustre. The situation was hardly helped by Bousquet's brusque dismissal of issues pertaining to middle class working women as irrelevant and his stated support for Clause 28.

Thus although Bousquet led 21-19 on the first ballot the second preference votes of the two female candidates eliminated went to Holmes on the second ballot giving her a 21-23 victory. It is notable that while there were no blacks voting over half the selectors were women. Holmes herself concedes that "If I'd been male I may have got a few less votes." Just one less vote would have denied her victory.

Bousquet's deselection may have serious repercussions in Kensington next week. His strength lay in the strong personal loyalty he commands among both black and white voters in the working-class north of the constituency.

Much of the immediate damage has been rectified by the emerging quality of Holmes as a candidate, the conciliatory support she's receiving from Bousquet (who signed her official nomination in a public gesture) and the sheer hard work of the local campaign. Yet there remain fears that a white middle-class candidate, no matter how proficient, may not be able to mobilise black votes. The campaign organisers recruited ex-Jamaican premier Michael Manley for weekend walkabout, so they are certainly trying.
David Upshal

Forces at play in Kensington by-election

The Conservatives' 14.3 per cent general election majority in Kensington—where this parliament's first by-election takes place next week—makes it the 76th most winnable Tory seat for Labour and one which Labour needs to win at the next general election to secure an overall majority.

As in many inner-city seats Labour has gradually been gaining ground. Although nationally Labour's vote was 6.5 per cent less in 1987 than in February 1974, in Kensington it was 0.1 per cent higher.

Further, whereas the Conservatives advanced in much of north London at the last general election, aided it seemed by the capital's economic recovery and the accompanying gentrification and perhaps Labour's vote-losing "London factor", Kensington was one of a handful of seats in the north-western corner of inner London where the swing was to Labour.

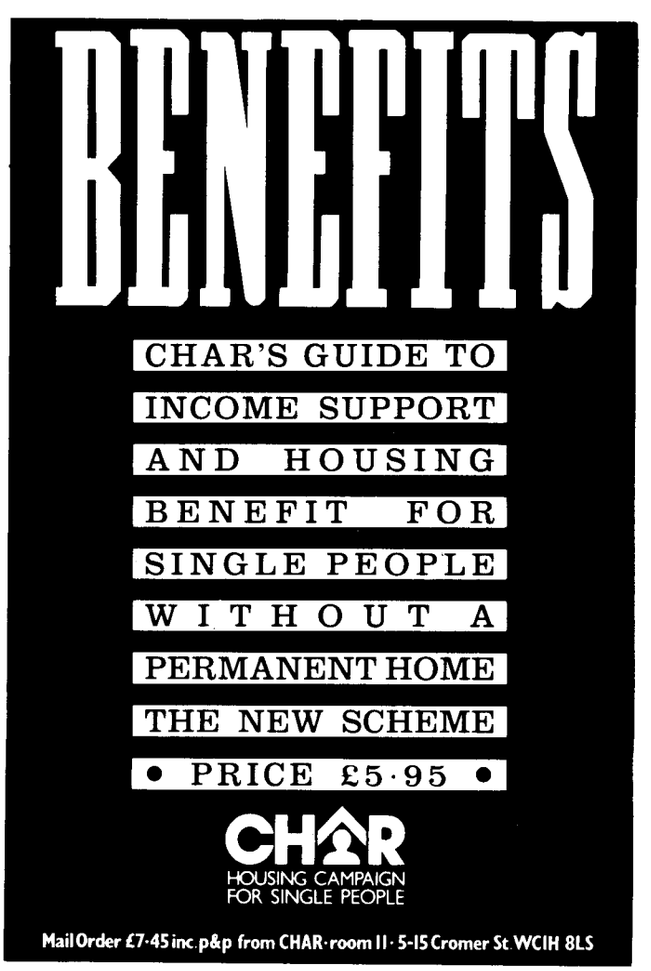
But the omens are not good for Labour. To be in contention for the seat, Labour needs to be at least neck and neck with the Tories in the national polls. After registering a closing of the gap in the spring, the post-Denzil Davies resignation polls put them 9-12 per cent behind.

Labour may also have reason to be worried about the local electoral register. Between 1983 and 1987, Kensington's electorate fell by 1,600, making it the third smallest seat in England. But this was a much slower rate of drop than in the late 1970s when it was losing over 1,000 voters a year. The by-election electorate (46,419), however, is as much as 1,800 down on the general election. Concern is being expressed that poorer residents have not registered for fear of the poll tax.

The by-election marks the first parliamentary contest between the SLD and the SDP, when arguably neither is in good shape. Kensington would not have been David Owen's first choice for the occasion. The SLD candidate, William Goodhart, was the SDP candidate in 1987 and is a leading figure amongst the ex-SDP mergerites (his home was used as their headquarters). The SLD have relatively little to lose in a seat where the Liberals and then the Alliance have always been firmly third. Yet the pressure will be on the SDP to do better than their May local election tally of winning one vote for every four cast for the SLD.

Despite the seat's marginality and its accessibility to the media, much of the traditional by-election circus has been absent. True, even at £1,000 per deposit, fringe candidates are in abundance. With 14 candidates, the ballot paper will be the longest since the 1984 Chesterfield by-election. But there have been no local polls and no Vincent Hanna.

And while the BBC and ITN will be there on the night, only the BBC will be chancing its arm with an exit poll. But for the first time the forecast will come from NOP rather than academics and students recruited by Hanna. *John Curtice*



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Soviet peace groups barred from END

Contradictions in the Soviet Union's *glasnost* policies became apparent at the seventh annual European Nuclear Disarmament (END) convention in Lund, Sweden, last week. Fifteen independent peace and human rights activists from the USSR, who had been invited, were refused exit permits by the Soviet authorities. But a twelve-strong official Soviet delegation, including members of the government-backed Soviet Peace Committee, was present.

It was the absent campaigners, however, who dominated the conference. In spite of a vast range of workshops for the thousand or so delegates from 45 countries, much of the debate—from the press conferences to the coffee bars—centred around their plight.

The Soviet independents had asked the organisers in advance to make attendance by the official Soviets conditional on a guarantee that any independents invited would be allowed exit permits. Neither the END international liaison committee, nor the Swedish preparatory group hosting the event was prepared to impose such a condition. When the permits were refused, the convention's organisers complained to the Soviet ambassador in Stockholm but said it was too late to do more. In response to complaints, they insisted they had made it clear that both state and independent groups were invited.

Not satisfied with this explanation, fifteen representatives of the independent groups—including the best-known peace group, the Moscow Trust Group, as well as the independent journal *Glasnost*, the Society for Human Rights and the *Perestroika 88* club—wrote to the convention accusing END of preferring a dialogue with "representatives of the KGB".

END's failure to respond to this letter became a focus for debate at the convention and led to the circulation of an open letter signed by over 100 participants, including Hungarians and Poles, urging eastern independent groups to keep in touch with the broader movement in the west, even if they felt betrayed by END officials.

According to some western campaigners, the continuing row over the exclusion of non-state Soviet organisations—which has surfaced at previous conventions—is putting at risk the credibility of END as a non-aligned peace organisation.

Probably the greatest irony in the patchy development of *glasnost* as witnessed at Lund was that some of the "official Soviets" expressed greater solidarity with their excluded compatriots than a number of the convention's organisers.

Albert Beale

More ironies from Lund

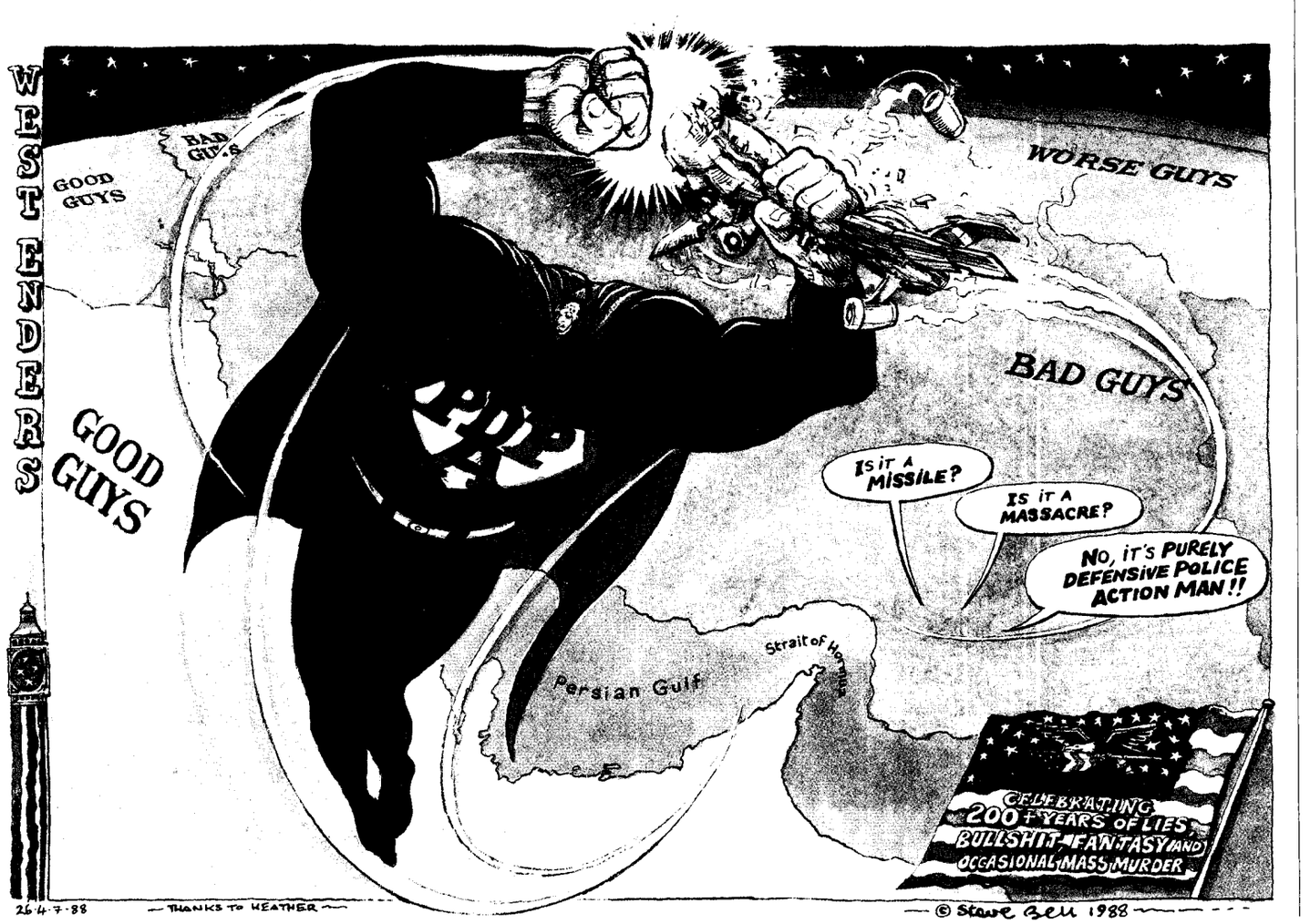
More news from Lund. After a workshop on Romania, delegates began circulating a protest petition about the Romanian government's "reconstruction" plans which involve the destruction of existing villages and the enforced migration of their populations. The people in the threatened villages are from Romania's oppressed Hungarian and German minorities.

Which makes it a classic human rights issue, then. Delegates were dismayed when CND's three representatives—the chair, Bruce Kent, executive member Jane Mayes and international worker Stephen Brown—all refused to sign on the grounds that CND's policy was not to get involved with human rights petitions unless they involved peace activists or conscientious objectors. The argument is that CND is a peace organisation and can't get sidetracked onto potentially divisive issues.

What's going on is that the strong Communist presence in CND is reluctant to condemn east bloc countries for violations of human rights as they want to work politically with the official peace organisations of the east.

Ironies abound. First, Kent and his two colleagues are passionately concerned about human rights. But they felt they couldn't sign. Second, among the other delegates dismayed by their position was Miklos Barrabas, general secretary of the official Hungarian peace council.

Miklos Barrabas is precisely the kind of old guard communist who CND are extremely anxious not to offend. He is contemplating writing to CND to implore them to think again.



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Prison service race monitoring falters

Prison department policies on equal opportunities are being jeopardised because over 70 per cent of prison officers have refused to fill in ethnic survey forms. Of those who did fill in the forms, only 0.6 per cent were from ethnic minorities.

The recalcitrant officers have been criticised for their attitude in the department's monthly journal, *Prison Service News*. The ethnic monitoring surveys have been carried out over four years. But *PSN* says: "Response within the Home Office was so poor that the figures are insufficient to enable the Department to monitor progress effectively."

A cartoon in the Prison Officers' Association magazine, *Gatelodge*, has also been attacked by the Prison Reform Trust. The cartoon shows two prison officers and a black inmate drawn with dreadlocks and exaggerated thick lips. One officer is saying to the other: "He wants some of this fresh tart the staff keeps talking about."

Stephen Shaw, director of the PRT, said: "How are black prisoners supposed to feel about their position when they pick up their union journal and see an insensitive cartoon like this?"

Ken Hyder

THIS ENGLAND

£3 Book Tokens for entries printed. (Postcards please.)

●A derelict cottage near Oundle, Northants., condemned by the council as unfit for human habitation, has been sold at auction for £206,000. —*Daily Mirror* (George Moor)

●When two young Verwood men were found in their car miles from their home with screwdrivers, rubber gloves, a torch and a balaclava with holes cut for the mouth and eyes, police thought there was something suspicious.

Malcolm Reading and Richard Cook claimed that they were driving around aimlessly because Reading had had an argument with his girlfriend. —*Bournemouth Evening Echo* (Nick Thomas)

●While one owner was showing me around, we passed a wall which he apologised for, saying the war damage had never been repaired. It turned out he was talking about the Civil War. —*Daily Mail* (George Moor)

PARLIAMENT

Unquiet alliance

Sarah Benton

You wouldn't have known in the House of Commons on Monday that the previous day a missile had zoomed up from the *USS Vincennes* to shoot down an Iranair Airbus, killing 290 people. No statement, no questions, no debate. "Well there won't be will there," said one old hand, "it's not our business."

A few days earlier, the Foreign Affairs Committee had published the results of its five-month investigation into the Iran-Iraq war. It went about this task because the war is Britain's business in every imaginable way. Thus the report covers oil, shipping trade, the fear of Islamic fundamentalism, the geographical closeness of the Soviet Union to the zone, and the apparently erratic policy of Britain's special friend, the United States. It notes that both Israel and Palestine are intertwined in the conflict. It refers, tentatively, to the nuclear capacity of both Iran and Iraq. It is hard to think of anything that more dramatically affects Britain's future "business".

What power does parliament have to shape Britain's policies abroad? The short answer is none. This is for two reasons. First, even the Foreign Affairs Commmittee has no right to close-question departments of state on many matters of defence or on any of foreign intelligence. The blanket ban proposed last week by Douglas Hurd on anyone working on "national security" talking to anyone at all at any time will bar even parliament gaining an informed judgment of Britain's international role.

The second reason for parliament's powerlessness is that the Prime Minister's love affair with the American President and with Britain's nuclear weapons has profoundly skewed any serious discussion of Britain's foreign policy. A report this week from the Institute for European Defence and Strategic Studies applies here: "There can be no doubt that what the government has failed to provide is what an alliance needs most during a time of transition and crisis—a sense of purpose as well as a clear understanding of the direction in which it is moving."

The timely report from the Foreign Affairs Committee must fail in its purpose, given these limitations. It concluded, uncontroversially, that the main task for Britain "is to end the conflict before it spreads and before events lead us on to much greater dangers." Quite so. And what does that mean? "In essence that means"—and you might think this next bit a non sequitur—"first a policy of the utmost firmness in protecting shipping and navigation in the Gulf, both through our own limited resources and in cooperation with the Americans and other allies."

But the most striking omission is on Western Europe. Despite our supposed shift to a future of European cooperation, the report wastes no words on what European cooperation in the Gulf would mean. The US overshadows all. And it doesn't take much reading between the lines to see that a policy of cooperation with the Americans appeared a more exasperating task than negotiations with Iran.

Here one of the committee's hands is tied by Britain's special relationship; it speaks politely of the "aberration" of Irangate. With the other hand it delivers a few gentlemanly pokes to the Reagan administration. The Royal Navy's Armilla patrol in the Gulf is praised by local rulers for its "cautious and efficient operation" compared with the high-profile Americans it says, smugly. While professing to be neutral, the US's extensive involvement in the Gulf has "placed them in a position where direct confrontation with Iran has occurred on several occasions". The decision of the Reagan administration to extend its protection to neutral ships in the Gulf should be supported, says the committee, "as long as it is implemented with care and in a non-provocative manner. The Minister of State told us that the Americans notified the British government of their decision, but did not set out a proposal and consult them on it. The failure of the US to consult was regrettable."

It is regrettable that the 11-man committee did not follow through these musings, did not give a quarter of the space it gave to analysing Iranian ideology to analysing an American view of Iran as the anti-Christ, or speak of the danger of an erratic but bellicosely anti-Iranian policy in the middle of a war zone. It could then have claimed foresight for trigger-happy Sunday.

Yet if this threadbare special relationship paralyses what the committee can think or say, it is the Official Secrets Act that will in future block its ears. If, even without Hurd's new proposals to keep information from foreign governments secret, the US does not consult Britain on operations that vitally affect British people, how will the Bill improve our "national security"? It will remove from the US the lingering duty to keep its special little friend informed, and remove from us any right to find out what sensitive operations abroad, our own, or any foreign government's employees might be carrying out.

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Beginning again

Gorbachev's changes won't only revolutionise the Soviet Union. They will change Europe too, says Anthony Barnett

A new political space opened up before us during the televised exchanges at the Party Conference in Moscow. At last, we could witness real politics—in the sense of an open exchange of views with uncertain outcome—in the Soviet Union. At once a tremendous advance and a banal normalisation now long overdue, it will be some time before we can absorb the significance of the meeting for our own political culture. But the co-ordinates of socialism have shifted decisively.

The conference confirmed Gorbachev's commitment to a form of democracy and pluralism. The general secretary's relaxed, self-assured domination of the proceedings was almost tutorial at times, as he tried to cajole the Soviet Communist Party into a new era. He is often compared with Krushchev. Indeed, the 19th Party Conference ranks with the party's 20th Congress in 1956, when Krushchev delivered his "secret" speech denouncing Stalin.

Can Gorbachev fall as Krushchev did? No. He might be ousted but not in the same way or with similar consequences. For all his courage, Krushchev was a figure of the past, self-made from a peasant background, curious about the world but an unreconstructed Russian boss. Gorbachev, as a Soviet official put it, represents the future. He is not just well educated, internationally experienced and sophisticated. Or at least, if he is, that really is something different for a politician—and perhaps not just in the USSR.

This distinction between the old system and the new came alive in the argument between Yeltsin and Ligachev. While the former wants faster change and the latter more central control, it's a mistake to see them as the representatives of left and right—as the radical and the conservative of reconstruction. On the contrary, they are two of a kind. Both city bosses, they are made from a mould formed in the fastness of the Soviet steppes. Ligachev was surely right to claim Yeltsin as his own protege. In their different ways both seek to implement *perestroika* from above.

The key exchanges which demonstrated Gorbachev's distinction and novelty came when he was challenged to get tough, to make change real where it counts, in the shops and factories. When told, "Mikhail Sergeyevich, you have to bang your fist," he responded: "Comrades, do you know what? As far as banging is concerned, and as far as the fist is concerned, then that has been pretty well perfected in our country... we have to refrain from using the old methods."

When he was told that he was too humane in his attitudes and that instead of trying to educate people he should get rid of the bureaucrats, Gorbachev replied that he was not simple-minded. "It won't work. That is what happened before in our country. We have tried a lot of things from above. Nothing results from this."

Frank Spooner Pictures

"We have tried a lot of things from above. It doesn't work." A Shopper in Arbat Street

Gorbachev and his like-minded colleagues have understood that if reconstruction is to be effective there has to be a revolution from below. This is what the combination of political and economic change in the USSR is about.

There is an old Moscow joke about the six contradictions of socialism. Do you know what they are?

1. Under socialism everyone has a job but nobody works.
2. Nobody works but the plan is always fulfilled.
3. The plan is always fulfilled but there is nothing in the shops.
4. There is nothing in the shops but the table is always full.
5. The table is always full but everyone always complains.
6. Everyone always complains but nobody wants to change.

This is a wonderful summary of the Brezhnev era. Now there must be change. The indifference, cynicism and passivity of the population towards the system in which they live will be transformed, although in what ways remains to be seen. They have been encouraged to want change for themselves, previously an impossible desire. If the final contradiction can be exploded then the rest may unravel.

Felicity Barringer of the *New York Times* interviewed some Muscovites in the street. Nial Abdulin, 32, a power worker was asked, "What, if anything, will be different about your life when the Moscow conference is over ?" He replied with a single word: "Hope." Hope is a dangerous substance, now much out of fashion on the English left. What it means in Moscow is first and foremost the end of fear. The key to change in Soviet life is lifting fear. Then, people can want change and even insist upon it.

Can this happen? A largly conservative Central Committee remains in place. Until now it has lived off fear and resignation. The conservatives showed themselves at the conference, and if this revelation of their massed force also diminished them, it was still an awesome indication of the task the radicals face.

The most positive signal from the conference was the concern for institutionalising and legalising the beginnings of democracy. For there have been other attempts by Communist leaders to implement change by appealing over the heads of the bureaucracy. Speaking in Minsk last year, Gorbachev called for the banner of initiative to be unfurled from below. He had swiftly to deny that he sought a cultural revolution on the Maoist lines which this phrase implied.

Rightly, because that kind of mobilisation is in fact Stalinist in its aims and methods. The millions of Red Guards crushed the innocent and then, despite their Little Red Book, fell out among themselves. By contrast, in his summing up, Gorbachev stated: "We are introducing a

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pluralism of opinions, rejecting intellectual monopoly. I think you will agree that the diverse views expressed at the conference have the principal unifying idea—it is necessary to move in all undertakings from the individual, to proceed from the interests of the people and to assert the humanistic values of socialism."

Some socialists will gag at the way the language of class has been abandoned in favour of the individual and the assertion of humanist values. Is this a victory for the west ? Kissinger thinks so, and there is clearly some truth in the observation that unless the west had faced down Brezhnev and threatened Moscow with the ludicrous spectre of Star Wars, Gorbachev would have failed to gain office. For without the support of the military and police apparatus, who were unable to deny the reality of their society's economic and technological disaster, change would not have been perceived as essential in the Kremlin.

Some wonderful ironies accompany this western success. It was what I call Nixon's Russia—the land of corruption and secrecy—that has fallen to the reformers. Perhaps the real western victory registered in Moscow last week was won by those who impeached Nixon, back in the seventies. It seems that in the process the key Soviet officials learnt the importance of law and public opinion.

The America that emerged from Nixon's downfall and defeat in Vietnam faced a massive problem as it tried to reinstate its claim to world leadership. Obliged to reject balance of power realpolitik, it chose human rights as its banner. The nauseous hypocrisy of Washington's moral righteousness, as it compounded third world debt and bankrolled Pol Pot, needs no emphasis here. The important point is that the idea took on a life of its own. The appeal to human rights worked, above all in the east. Despite its authors, it has now begun to dissolve the cold war.

A marvellous example of the way our own right got it wrong is provided by Roger Scruton. At the beginning of last year the Soviet expert Archie Brown suggested in the *Times Literary Supplement* that significant change might be underway in the USSR. Scruton attacked him as a gullible and grovelling sovietologist who refused to sacrifice his visa for the sake of mere honesty. The Kremlin, Scruton claimed, "reforms itself only at the top and only so as to perpetuate its totalitarian power", and he scorned those like Brown who claimed to observe "total transformations in a system which nonetheless remains, from year to year and decade to decade, curiously untransformed".

The foolish absolutism and unpleasant *ad hominem* argument of Scruton was reminiscent of the kind of attacks launched against Isaac Deutscher when he saw better and further than the orthodox right. In the last chapters of *Heretics and Renegades*, Deutscher insisted that the structures laid down by the revolution of 1917 would open the door eventually to reform, despite their tyranny. He too was promptly denounced as an apologist.

But I am not sure that the kind of change we are now witnessing in the Soviet Union was foreseen by anyone. Theirs is a policy review which really is a policy review, and which seeks to change methods, which strives to open up the political process to the public and which stresses the creative role of the individual rather than the collective.

Impediments to change still tower over the forces which seek to transform the largest country in the world. But what matters in politics—in Russia above all—is momentum. The conference sent its message of the new open way of dealing to every god-forsaken corner of Siberia and Uzbekistan, and all their little tsars, as tens of millions watched the political exchanges on television.

If he succeeds it will change the definition of who we are, too

Here in London, the day after the conference closed, a mini-version of the new Soviet relaxation could be seen at the British Film Institute. The acting head of the Film Makers Union, Andrei Smirnov, described the new system of self-financing. "There is only one freedom, not two (and he meant the freedom to serve audiences and customers), I've had too much experience of making films for bureaucrats". But Aleksandr Sokurov, born in 1951, whose film, dedicated to Tarkovsky, *A Lonely Human Voice* had just been shown, disagreed with him. Principled and Christian, he did not want the Russian people to become like westerners. He wanted more subsidies, not fewer. He attacked commercialisation and television. For him, the cinema was an art that still needed to be thought through, its role to express the moral experience of each generation, that God exists.

Smirnov would have none of this pan-slavism. Like the Bolsheviks' utopia, he said, Sokurov's could only lead to a sea of blood. His films were pure and exceptional, but his ideas were confused and dangerous. Russians were people just like westerners, their present lack of civilisation "has nothing to do with the peculiarities of the structure of our soul". And when a member of the audience said that commercial tyranny was as bad as political, Smirnov exploded: "No, never!".

Nobody discussed "socialist cinema". And the debate that matters about the public interest, freedom, choice and truthfulness still lies ahead for the Soviets. But what struck me about the discussion was that it was not entirely out of place in London, and that Smirnov's claim, like Gorbachev's, is that the peoples of the Soviet Union are part of our world, not a separate one.

Do we agree? In its editorial last week, the *Spectator* wrote that "By force of circumstances, we have increasingly to regard the whole of Western Europe as our homeland". And the rest of Europe? Is only one part of Berlin our homeland, but not the other? The main thrust of the argument was its insistence that we must defend ourselves from the Russians. Yet they also claim to be European. Gorbachev's conference democracy, like his disarmament proposals, calls for a new relationship between east and west. If he succeeds it will challenge the definition of who we are.

With Nella Bielski, Anthony Barnett is the author of "Soviet Freedom", Picador £3.95

Ingrid Garshon/Reflex

A victory for the west? Fashion shopping in Leningrad

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Verdict on Cleveland

Butler-Sloss urges a softly-softly approach to child sexual abuse. But, asks Jeremy Laurance, are the resources there?

There is a striking omission from the Cleveland Inquiry report, published this week. It reaches no firm conclusion as to whether the 121 children identified as victims of sex abuse by Drs Marietta Higgs and Geoffrey Wyatt in five months last year were correctly diagnosed or not.

The omission is entirely consistent with the tenor of Lord Justice Butler-Sloss's 250 page judgment. The detection and management of child sexual abuse is still in its infancy. In the light of the inevitable uncertainty, the adoption of firm views and entrenched positions is inappropriate. That, in a nutshell, is what went wrong in Cleveland.

All the professionals involved are vindicated for making an "honest attempt" to detect and deal with sex abuse. Of Higgs and Wyatt the report says it was "entirely proper" for them to "play their part" in identifying the child victims. It dismisses allegations that Higgs examined children for sex abuse indiscriminately. It says: "We have in general no reason to question the accuracy of her clinical observations." But it criticises "the certainty of the conclusions" she drew. "In the current state of knowledge she was unwise to come to a firm conclusion rather than a strong suspicion on physical signs alone." While confirming that the sign of anal dilatation "is abnormal and suspicious and requires further investigation", it adds that "it is not in itself evidence of anal abuse."

The doctors, in short, did not consider the implications of what they were doing. But neither did the police and the social workers. It is not only the visionaries that are blind.

Butler-Sloss's central message is to advise "a calm, measured and considered approach to the problem of child sexual abuse" which is acknowledged to be widespread and serious. That is the antithesis of what happened in Cleveland. She would probably reject the depiction of sex abuse as a "cancer" in society as too emotive. But the medical analogy may prove apter and potentially more useful than it might first appear.

However minor the ailment a patient brings to his or her doctor, cancer will nearly always figure among its possible causes. Because of its seriousness, the good and conscientious doctor will look for reasons to exclude it before packing the patient off with a bottle of cough medicine or a packet of indigestion tablets.

Butler-Sloss's report confirms that the doctors and social workers were right to suspect sex abuse in the cases presented to them. It is a possible explanation for a range of physical and behavioural disorders. But there is a danger. The inquiry was warned that when a "new" illness is described, there is often a "flurry of excitement" among professionals. When it involves "emotionally powerful material" it is all the more likely to affect "judgment and action".

Once child sex abuse is suspected, what is the appropriate response? We may not yet know what is right but we now know what is wrong. Clearly, Butler-Sloss confirms, to go in with all legal, technological and social work guns blazing, is *not* appropriate. No more than it would be to respond to a suspected case of cancer with the whole panoply of hi-tech tests: x-rays, scans, radio-isotopes, biopsies—the lot. Not only is this frequently uncomfortable and distressing for the patient, it is also uselessly extravagant with precious resources. In Cleveland aggressive intervention caused the system to buckle under the strain. "Cautious measured intervention" is Butler-Sloss's message here.

Even where sex abuse is confirmed, the correct response is not obvious. With cancer, the reponse used to be unvarying: if in doubt, cut it out. Now the approach is more conservative: radical surgery, besides being of little value, is increasingly recognised to be worse than the disease.

Bizarrely, in cases of sex abuse, the favoured response has been to remove the victim rather than the cause. The children became "double victims" in Butler-Sloss's phrase. They suffered "unhappy experiences which should not be allowed to happen again".

In forward-thinking authorities a more flexible response is now in operation. The report describes a number of examples. So long as the children can be protected, usually by their mothers, they may remain at home. Then the long process of repair can begin.

The key here is surveillance. If the social services department has sufficient staff and resources it is justified in adopting this high risk strategy. But where there are too few resources, removal into care becomes the only safe option. Once the family is split up, the shortage of resources will make rehabilitation less likely—and the long spiral of decline is assured.

Butler-Sloss does not grasp this nettle. But the shortage of social workers in many departments, especially in London, is now critical. Only last week a leaked report by the government's social services inspectorate revealed that 600 children registered as "at risk" of sexual or physical abuse in London had no allocated social worker.

Butler-Sloss has produced a clear, fair, even-handed report. It provides few answers and less comfort and many will feel it does not go far enough. But one conclusion is unmistakable: the over-reaction in Cleveland was a direct result of the severe criticism meted out to professionals in the past for failing to act quickly or firmly enough to protect children being damaged. It is not only the doctors, social workers and police who bear the responsibility for what happened; the public-and the press-must bear their share of the blame, too.

Cleveland: 'Higgs was not major culprit'

THE two doctors at the centre of the Cleveland child sex abuse controversy will not be found the major culprits when the judicial inquiry into the affair reports next week, according to senior government sources.

It became clear last night that the report w...

relations have been badly damaged by the affair.

Dr Marietta Higgs and Dr Geoffrey Wyatt, the consultant paediatricians who reported 121 cases of child sex abuse in Middlesbrough in the first six months of last year and who have since been moved to other duties, will be credited with uncover...

sastic way the doctors went about their work.

"It is not the doctors' diagnosis that will come in for criticism but their management of that diagnosis," one figure close to the inquiry said yesterday.

Much of the criticism in the Butler-Sloss report will h... the cond...

by David Hughes
Political Correspondent

were taken from their families in the wake of the Higgs-Wyatt findings.

The 74-day inquiry is expected to report that the al...

the complex nature of the report will allow protagonists on both sides of the argument to claim victory.

"It is the sort of document that will allow people to pick out evidence that can vin... or vilify the same in...

by the government's standing medical advisory committee on the RAD techniques used by Higgs and Wyatt to identify potential victims of sexual abuse.

This will criticise the way Higgs and Wyatt placed too much weight on the RAD ...ques, for being over-...

too strongly that no physical sign can at the present time be regarded as diagnostic of child sexual abuse," the committee says. But while questioning the judgment of the two doctors, the committee will pay tribute to their dedication and integrity.

Butler-Sloss's report w... ministers earlier this ...

Muddle as leak reveals child abuse inquiry findings

Cleveland report will disappoint

by Charles Oulton

COUPLE in Cleveland whose five-year-old son was diagnosed last year as having been sexually abused moved house yesterday in an attempt to rebuild their shattered lives.

The couple have suffered the ki... whispering campaign that has all... driven the 36-year-old father o... two jobs since the couple's two ...dren and three foster children taken from them.

The family's move comes 10 ... before the publication of the go... ment report on the Cleveland a... which may merely increase the ... gush of parents caught up in the ... troversy because of its inconclu... findings.

The inquiry's expected failure ... reach a clear verdict on the 121 chil... ren involved will be a bitter blow ... many families who needed its ... equivocal suppor... anxious...

Cleveland: the doctors were wrong

Clare Dyer and David Brindle

THE judicial inquiry into the Cleveland child sex abuse controversy has found that many children were wrongly taken away from their parents and put into care.

The inquiry report has concluded that Dr. Marietta Higgs and Dr Geoffrey Wyatt, the paediatricians whose diagnostic techniques were at the centre of the controversy, acted in good faith but were too keen to prove cases of abuse.

The report questions the reli... ability of their main diagnos...

to their care allegedly because of Sexual abuse.

"A judicial inquiry into why this should be showed that, although the doctors who had made the diagnosis of sexual abuse were acting properly, nevertheless they had been somewhat over-zealous and the tests they carried out were not infallible.

"Therefore a large number of children removed from their parents need not have been."

This was immediately taken to be a summary of the main findings of the Cleveland inquiry, led by Lord Justice Butler-Sloss. The...

last year when, in a period of seven months, there were 270 successful applications to magistrates to remove children from their parents. Sexual abuse was diagnosed in about 150 of the cases.

Despite the Lord Chancellor's Department's belated explanation of the conference paper, its main points — uncontested last night by the DHSS — will be seen as an accurate summary of the inquiry findings.

Rev Michael Wright, co-ordinator of the Cleveland Parents' Support Group, which ...

Social workers exonerated before inquiry report

Cleveland staff 'to be cleared'

by PAUL ROUTLEDGE

...CIAL workers in... ...ved in the Cleveland ...ild sex abuse scandal ...uld not be disciplined for ... their actions, ... reveal.

Teeside shows no sign of abating. Mr Stuart Bell, M... for Middlesbrough, who ... sharply criticised ... report, yesterday insist... that "heads should certain... roll" in the Cleveland Soc... Services Department.

No such outcome w... in the light of ...

...as referrals of sex abuse ... made by the paediatricians at ... Middlesbrough General Hospital in May and June last ...

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Unhappy childhood

Child abuse is a major concern. But Nicholas Tucker finds an extra sense of crisis in the air for anyone young

With a heritage that includes some of the finest novels written about childhood, some of the best literature ever produced for the young and some of the first legislation passed to protect children, Britain could be expected to remain a place where our children are thought about in a rather special way. Yet while child sexual abuse in Cleveland, or child murder, make banner headlines and vengeful editorials, British society seems dangerously indifferent to the interests of children in general.

Babies still retain a golden image with advertisers and more lately film-makers, but their older counterparts often arouse something closer to general scepticism. In literature Wordsworth's reverence for childhood has been replaced by the moral nihilism of William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* or Doris Lessing's repulsive latest novel *The Fifth Child*. And while A.S. Neill's theories about progressive education had a brief re-run of popularity in the sixties, any proposals today for pupil self-government or optional lessons would seem as dated as all those Penguin Education Specials now cluttering up jumble sales and second-hand bookstalls.

Part of the explanation for this must rest with a government that shows little commitment to children beyond an idealised attachment to the family. When the intention is also to cut all types of social funding, it is not surprising that little is heard now from government or local authorities about what children need, and should expect from the wider community, in order to reach anything like their full potential. Radical proposals for improving child welfare suggested a decade ago are now casually set aside as irrelevant—hence the demise of the Court report, recommending the establishment of special paediatric services, and the Finer report, with its plans for proper financial support for parents.

Instead, the family is now put forward as the one essential moral and welfare support children should look to and also, paradoxically, as something that must always manage to fend for itself, or else. But reducing the value of child benefit and cutting free school meals hardly signal a compassionate view of children, or of the responsibility society shares for helping out poorer families. Those inadequate parents who can't or won't get their act together and the fate of their luckless children simply do not fit into the philosophy of Thatcherism and, therefore, effectively cease to exist as objects of government planning or concern. In a cost-cutting atmosphere, it is not just children's requirements that are sold short; the image of childhood itself as something universally deserving of, and highly responsive to, national investment also falls by the Tory wayside.

Sally and Richard Greenhill

"British society is dangerously indifferent to the interests of children"

But it would be facile to blame politics alone for modern society's comparative indifference towards children. Such attitudes become possible only when in tune with popular prejudice. While the British probably love their own offspring as much as do parents in any other nation, there is a certain remoteness in this relationship, combining an odd mixture of sentimentality and fear of over-indulgence.

Thus, sending small children away to boarding school so they can "learn to stand on their own feet as soon as possible" continues to surprise other nationalities. As does the famous telegram Arthur Ransome's child characters received from their otherwise loving absent father, on requesting his permission to go sailing: "Better drowned than duffers. If not duffers, won't drown." Sink or swim indeed. Elsewhere our long attachment to corporal punishment at school testifies to a lingering, curiously puritanical fear that failure to confront the young with harsh realities will somehow fatally spoil them.

Such traditional attitudes apply now only in a minority of homes, yet their shadow still falls across many of the ways in which the rest of us relate to children. Some otherwise caring parents will be reluctant to pick up a crying baby even in the first week of its life for fear of encouraging more sobbing and thereby, "making a rod for your own back". The same fear of spoiling children is also reflected in society's tendency to go on ignoring their needs.

Mothers still search in vain for facilities beyond the home for feeding or changing a baby, or for toilets in their local children's library where the older infants can pee. In crowded streets, traffic islands are usually too small to get a pram on to, and in the shop the same pram may either be forbidden or else involves a struggle with swing doors, stairs or lifts whose doors cannot be held open until everyone is safely inside. Trying to get the pram on to a bus or tube on the journey home is fraught with problems. Once at home, places outside suitable for a child to play will be at a premium, as cars have been allowed to steal roads and pavements, making any tolerably safe children's game impossible.

It doesn't have to be like this. Some other European nations set a far better example in all these areas. There are even special parks that include miniature tracks and moveable baby cars to help children learn better road safety at an early age. In the Tivoli gardens in Copenhagen, benevolent attendants regularly sort children into orderly ranks in front of the free Pierrot

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Geoff Franklin/Network

Living with prematurely adult expectations

shows there, small at the fore, bigger ones at the back. British park-keepers, sadly, are not on the whole identified by mothers as particularly helpful towards the young.

Once children start growing up, adults may retreat from them in other ways. We are still less than frank about sexuality, leaving the young to learn about such things largely from each other. When at risk or abused, children thus have no proper vocabulary with which to communicate their distress and little certainty as to where to turn for help. So shame and guilt continue to disable children who themselves are defenceless victims; a role reversal that is as illogical as it is appalling.

Arguing for greater frankness between adults and children in this area is well and good but unlikely to happen without a more general adult willingness to know about, and if necessary act upon, every important area in a child's life. Often, too, children are left out of the most important family decisions, with divorce sprung upon them as a *fait accompli* rather than as something in which they have at least a legitimate voice. In fact, they have almost no legal rights to self-protection and self-representation in family affairs.

At school, too, pupils worried about bullying, poor teaching or their own bad progress find it extraordinarily difficult to raise such matters. Structures for occasionally listening to pupils as opposed to talking at them simply do not exist at any serious level in education. Once given their voice, children can be concerned and constructive about their own schooling. Few believe this because British adult images of schoolchildren as necessarily cheeky and irresponsible go deep, regardless of the fact that various schools abroad have been managing perfectly well with similar strategies for some time.

This remoteness from children was once part of the whole middle class experience of childhood, always very different from the more foreshortened affair lived through by poorer children. With a small army of attendants separating them from adults into specially allocated rooms, well-to-do children were kept in an artificial limbo involving its own food, clothes, entertainments and bedtimes. Few parents now have the time or energy to maintain this separate existence, with the result that children tend to eat the same food as adults, watch the same TV shows, share the same living space and wear miniaturised versions of the same clothes. At their parties they dance to the same music, sometimes consume the same drinks and increasingly apply the same cosmetics.

Adrian Mole is the tragi-comic child hero of our times

All this often offends nostalgic feelings for the particular, rather special, turn of the century bourgeois experience we now choose to think of as "real" childhood, so lending extra weight to feelings of general unease with our own young. For the children themselves, the combination of infantilism where their rights in the school and the family are concerned, coupled with prematurely adult expectations in other areas of their social life, can turn any orderly progression towards maturity into something far more muddled and uncertain.

Yet speeding up infancy is not necessarily undesirable, given that previous isolation from adult life could be very restricting. Eliminating obstacles between generations could be a good thing if only parents and children had sufficient time to benefit from this new freedom. The children of working class mothers who have so often had jobs outside the home have long been accustomed to being left on their own. Increasingly they are being joined by their middle class counterparts, also discovering that mothers with careers elsewhere are not being compensated for by fathers putting in more hours at home. Conscientious parents tend to spend what time there is left helping with homework rather than doing anything more relaxed.

When marriages dissolve, yet more parental time can be taken up with new affairs and perhaps the establishment of a step-parent, with children sometimes used as adult confidantes or even mentors in the process. Small wonder that they may react sourly, given that they are now often deprived of any balancing wider network of relatives and are therefore frequently left for hours with only a TV set for chief companion and guide. Small wonder that parents in their turn may view their offspring with a mixture of guilt and resentment. These are not the best ingredients for establishing a more positive image of childhood than the one provided by that tragi-comic child hero of our times, Adrian Mole.

Parents and children who still manage to live happily together are, of course, another matter. But there is an extra sense of crisis in the air now for anyone young, regardless of home circumstances. Life in Thatcher's Britain is quickly becoming quite ruthlessly competitive. For children to succeed, it is no longer enough to be born strong and healthy; to get by now it is also necessary to have brains, and quite a lot of them too. Aware of this and conscious of the importance of the early, formative years, many parents look increasingly to toys, books or various pre or after-school activities that contain a strong teaching element. Once at school, other hot-house pressures apply, with the new Education Act's compulsory tests in the state system soon to parallel the regular marks, grades and form positions so beloved of the private sector.

Playing for high academic stakes is all very well for the naturally gifted but tough on the child failing to come across as tomorrow's high-earning graduate or technician. Such children, together with those who are given no particular parental encouragement, may fairly soon come to be seen as expensive or embarrassing future misfits in today's high-tech society; a view far removed from more generally optimistic or even frankly envious images of childhood sometimes common in the previous two centuries.

More than ever children now need the maximum time, choice and opportunity to find their way towards those social and employment skills that should be able to provide them with some sort of assured future. Opening up genuinely constructive educational and training opportunities for this sector of youth and keeping them available as long as possible is clearly of enormous importance for all our futures. For these reasons, the Labour Party's ambitious but so far grievously undersold educational plans for all 16-19 year olds as compared with the current "YTS or not much else" philosophy could still turn out to be its single most forward-looking policy contribution of the decade. ●

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Breaking up is hard to do

Today the TUC suspends the electricians' union, but in so doing it highlights its own vulnerability, says James Stephenson

The much heralded split in trade union ranks has arrived. Today, the Electrical Electronic Telecommunications and Plumbing Union (EETPU) will be suspended from the TUC. The suspension stands until September, when Congress will determine the electricians' fate.

That is, if the EETPU does not jump before it is pushed. The executive is balloting all 330,000 members on an amendment to its rules. Rule 25 says that the union shall be represented at the TUC. A proviso that this should not prevent the union "properly representing its members" is proposed. The result is likely to be an endorsement of the leadership's line.

The EETPU's departure from the TUC is being portrayed as a rift between backward-looking stagnating unions on one side and dynamic, lean and fit rivals on the other. Industrial and political extremists against moderates. The future against the past. Eric Hammond, the union's general secretary, has been adept at fostering such interpretations of the TUC's ructions, although in peddling this line, he is preaching to the converted. It is, says Hammond, "the culmination of a campaign against us by militant leftwingers which has dragged on for more than a quarter of a century."

In fact, the split is over something quite different: old-fashioned poaching of members by one union from others. At stake is the *raison d'être* of the TUC. Trade union federation is in essence intended to prevent internecine warfare between unions wherever their interests and spheres of influence clash. And if the TUC fails to hold the ring between competing unions, the very rationale for its existence disappears. The TUC is ever more shunned by the government. The justification for its continuing presence depends upon its ability to keep unions from each other's throats. In an era of political ostracism for the TUC, an industrial logic is the only logic.

This is the real battleground between the TUC General Council and the electricians. It is not a conflict over the principle of single union or no-strike deals. The Orion Electrics and Christian Salveson cases are in that sense incidental to the dispute.

Bill Morris, deputy general secretary of the transport workers' union, made the point on the Call Kate Adie phone-in on radio 4 last week. The EETPU is in trouble with the TUC, said Morris, "not because of single union deals but because it has adamantly refused to accept an award from the TUC disputes committee. That is the issue."

He went on to say, "we are not against single union agreements. We have literally thousands of single union agreements with employers." The TGWU has also signed no-strike deals with binding arbitration. The EETPU's offence is to ignore the first commandment of the TUC's bible, the 1939 Bridlington principles: thou shalt not covet thy neighbours' members.

The Bridlington principles specify that, "No union shall commence organising activities at any establishments or undertaking in respect of any grade or grades of workers in which another union has the majority of workers employed and negotiates wages and conditions, unless by arrangement with that union."

An old-style feud over poaching, not a principled falling out

TUC disputes committees ruled against the EETPU on this principle in both the Orion and Christian Salveson cases. In the Orion case the electricians concluded a single union deal with a Japanese television component manufacturer, for its Port Talbot plant, in May 1987.

But transport workers' union officials had already recruited 38 members from a total workforce of just over 100 people. Seventy-eight employees had signed a petition calling on the employer to recognise the TGWU. The electricians had no members at the time of the deal. In response, the EETPU points to a ballot held at the plant in April last year which produced a 96 per cent vote in favour of being represented by the union.

In Bill Morris's mind the issue is simple. "What you don't do is a deal with the boss when you've got no members." The EETPU, according to Morris, "trampled all over the TGWU's interests." Here, in other words, is an old-style feud over poaching, not a principled falling out over modern approaches to trade unionism. A feuding made worse by the continuing contraction in union membership. Eric Hammond claims that the EETPU's membership has increased by a thousand in the first quarter of 1988. But TUC membership figures published last month, show that despite its much-vaunted new realism, the union's membership slipped more than 6,000 last year.

The EETPU also signed two single union deals with distribution company Christian Salveson for two plants in their Salstream division, which supplies Marks and Spencer. The union argued (unsuccessfully) that the deals were on greenfield sites. In consequence, the union did not feel bound to consult other Christian Salveson unions, the TGWU, the General Municipal and Boilermakers and the Union of Shop Distributive and Allied Trade Unions (USDAW).

The EETPU complains that the TUC is moving the goalposts, but in both these cases they would have fallen foul of the original Bridlington principles. However, the TUC is trying to adapt Bridlington to modern trade union practice. In 1985, the TUC extended Bridlington into the new area of single union deals. It specifies that unions should "have regard to the interests of other unions which may be affected and should consider their position in the drafting of such agreements." Gavin Laird, general secretary of the pro-EETPU Amalgamated Union of Engineers (AEU), complains of "going down a road being charted for us, where the general council of the TUC takes upon itself powers it never had before. Powers that can tell unions how to behave in the sense of agreements they should or should not negotiate." But the TUC members cannot be calumniated simultaneously as backwoodsmen and condemned for adapting to new practices.

Further modification of the Bridlington principles is proposed by a special review body set up by Congress last year. It is due to report in the next fortnight. It will recommend a six-month trial for a procedure of mandatory notification of all single union deals, followed by TUC guidance to the union involved.

The EETPU is tired of obeying the rules of the TUC club. In the increasingly cut-throat scramble for members among the major unions, the electricians regard themselves as well placed to thrive. The electricians would relish a struggle between craft unions like the EETPU and the AEU on one hand and the general unions on the other. But they must carry the engineers with them. Alone the EETPU may be too small to prosper. If the planned merger with the 815,000-strong AEU goes ahead, the picture would be very different.

Speculation is now rife about the electricians' future outside the TUC. The departure of the EETPU is unlikely to lead to the creation of a serious rival block to the TUC. The electricians do not want such a body. They are not escaping one set of rules to be bound by another. They want freedom of manoeuvre.

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Can the health service pull through?

A typical day in the life of a Tower Hamlets GP, I suppose. Forty patients seen in a day that starts at 9am and doesn't finish till 7pm, a dozen referral letters (three trying to get patients moved up out-patient waiting lists and two about housing problems), two delegations worried about elderly relatives, a near-row with a hospital registrar who will "look at" an ill patient but can't guarantee admission, one asthma attack averted and a wrestling match to fit an IUD for a Somalian mother of five who nearly bites through her blouse in fear but who can't understand a word of my attempted reassurance.

At least there were no drunks in the waiting room or manic depressives trying to climb through the car-park window. Down the corridor, the health visitors (30 per cent annual turnover in Tower Hamlets) dash in and out of the local estates supporting isolated mothers and in the afternoon a community psychiatric nurse (with over a decade's training and experience but paid less than a City PA) tries to sort out the psychiatric crises. And back in reception, they're chasing ambulances which haven't turned up and patient names from 90 national origins which are perpetually going astray. We all work under constant pressure with inadequate resources, so it's impossible to get the work in perspective.

And when you watch a blow-dried Tory Minister of Health and Social Security telling you that the NHS has never had it so good, you know you're going a bit crazy. "We are building a better health service and providing more care for those in need," boasted the Conservative election manifesto in June 1987.

The gap I experience between government rhetoric and my working reality is not particular to an inner-city GP. Later in the same week an obstetrician in the neighbouring health district reports to a medical committee on which I sit that the new Homerton Hospital, which only opened this year, has had to transfer two women in established labour across London. One first-time mother, Valerie Brasington, said, "After three hours I was transferred to a completely different hospital which I had never seen before. By the time I arrived at the Westminster, contractions were coming every two minutes. I was very tense and upset."

The new Homerton Hospital is a tremendous improvement on the dank, dingy Salvationist maternity hospital it replaced. The problem is, as community and local medical bodies have warned all along, that it is far too small: instead of the needed increase in maternity beds, the newly opened hospital has 22 fewer beds than

the units it replaced. And Part 2 of the project, the promise on which the closures were sold, has now been mysteriously cancelled. Meanwhile a bed, a midwife and time to recover from labour can no longer be guaranteed in one of the most recently opened hospitals in Britain. Patient "turnover" (the statistic so beloved of government health statisticians) is so high and job satisfaction so correspondingly low that 33 per cent of midwifery vacancies are unfilled.

And so it goes on. A newly appointed consultant psychiatrist struggling to build community services is, unexpectedly, found relaxing in the local. "It's crazy," he says, "the district manager has instructed us to reduce our clinical workload. They want to pay us to twiddle our thumbs." And in the *British Medical Journal* a London renal physician whose kidney ward has just been closed, temporarily-but-probably-for-good, reflects on the destinations of his demoralised nurses (two to the private sector, two emigrating), and his own changed life: "I have adapted to less work, spend less time in the hospital, am often home by 6pm and read an increasing number of novels." As for British researchers, who once led the world in medical advances, morale is exceptionally low: the most honourable advice a teaching hospital consultant can now give an aspiring Crick or Fleming is "emigrate". And on television I watch nurses on salaries which are a monthly insult painfully deciding to leave the RCN and join the magnificent 3 February protest strike because, as one said, "We've tried petitions, marches and protests and they just don't take a bit of notice."

But it's not just the Thatcher cuts. It's not even unchallenged poverty, unequal access, skimped spending, out-of-date buildings, undemocratic operation and social inequality, although each of these factors has powerful effects. Together they add up to something more fundamental: a cheap but inefficient system which answers the needs of the individuals who stay in power and fails to tackle the major causes of ill-health.

So although there has been a marked improvement in health care since the introduction of the National Health Service, it has been a pie-

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Forty years after the NHS was founded, David Widgery argues that it has not been given a real chance.

BBC Hulton Picture Library

A child of the time: this baby was photographed for a 1953 "Picture Post" feature called "I want to be a nurse".

cemeal rather than a planned process. Those areas which have the most disease still have the fewest doctors and facilities, and better-off patients mysteriously manage to cream off the best standards of treatment. Far from evaporating, poverty and ill-health have persisted and worsened.

The scientific advances are still isolated in the centres of excellence. Many of the medical opportunities opened up by a national health service, especially in the fields of preventative medicine and health education, are not sufficiently explored. Many of the unattractive aspects of pre-NHS medicine—private practice with NHS facilities, the absolute power of consultants (which many do not themselves relish), the dominance of the teaching hospitals, the underdevelopment of general practice—have not been remedied.

None of this amounts to an argument against a national health service. The crisis in marketplace medicine in Italy or the persistently low standards of public health in North America should be a warning against any return to the old system. But we can now see that it was the wrong sort of nationalisation; its principles were not pursued consistently and it was leaking with the compromises built into its original structure. Most of all it has had to exist in a society whose central economic tenets are diametrically opposed to the values the NHS attempts to promulgate.

This is not an easy time to advance principles about the health service, but we should not forget that such a service would never have come about if those principles had not existed in the minds of tens of thousands of people. "The party's over," say the new realists. "We will simply have to lower our sights." "It makes the best of a bad job," says the administrator about his plan. It reminds me of the Brecht poem: "Those who eat their fill, speak to the hungry about the wonderful times to come. Those who lead the country into the abyss, call ruling too difficult for ordinary men." But the administrators who will carry out the gutting, and the government which instructs them say, as they stride into the abyss, that the public does not understand the issues. In the face of their "realism", one starts to wonder if the nurses, doctors, laundry workers and local people who protest really are unhinged extremists?

I think not. And I think that those ordinary people who have resisted the closures will eventually be seen as wise and honourable, just as we now see the unpopular and isolated pioneers of public health measures as the clearsighted ones. "No government," wrote Aneurin Bevan, "that attempts to destroy the NHS can hope to command the support of the British people." I hope he was right. I am an Attlee child, part of the generation shaped by Beveridge and Bevan; I got the chance to train as a doctor because of postwar educational reform and the grammar schools; I survived childhood illness in NHS hospitals; I know what even those quite modest reforms have meant to the quality of people's lives, their health and their human development. I cannot sit quietly by while the health service is dismantled before my eyes, while children leave school with no future.

After being involved in political campaigning for years, you become a little numbed, even to your own arguments. So it was almost with surprise that I realised quite how much I cared about the future of the NHS. I was in a hill-top chapel, high over the slums of Palermo, which has been ravaged by several polio epidemics. Inside the chapel was the Sicilian alternative to a health service. They relied on the power of prayer. The statue of Saint Theresa was festooned with the limbs of plastic dolls, each one symbolising the withered part of a loved one. Outside the chapel, stall-owners sold tawdry mascots and religious paraphernalia. In reality, the prayers did nothing except enrich the priests on the hill, while the polio victims begged, stole or died in the alleys below. Turning to my airmail copy of the *Guardian* for a breath of liberalism, I read a news item: "A facelift worth £5,000 carried out by a top Harley Street surgeon is top prize in a raffle for high society guests at a special ball in the Dorchester Hotel." Both the scenes outside the chapel and the newspaper articles were examples of the barbarism of societies where good health is not a right but a prize in some unearthly lottery; societies where good health is unequal because power and wealth are distributed unequally.

I, too, had had polio in the 1956 epidemic. Through the NHS I spent five years having a series of reconstructive operations which largely cured the crippling effects of the disease. Over those painful five years I graduated from wheelchair and callipers to my first pair of shop-bought shoes. My parents never could have afforded that surgery in a private health service, an insurance-based system would never cover it, and I am doubtful about Saint Theresa. The present cuts threaten exactly that kind of surgery which ought to be available on the NHS without question, but which can be "done without". John Sherrard, the consultant orthopaedic surgeon at Sheffield Children's Hospital, has stated that because of staff shortages in the Sheffield area "Spastic children will have their hips go out of date so that they will never be able to walk, children who remain ugly through curvature of the spine will get progressively worse and look twice as ugly, and others cannot go to school because they cannot wear shoes." The same goes, only more so, for the premature babies who can't get their neonatal cots and the deteriorating renal patient waiting too long for a transplant.

My own life tells me that the level of compassion with which a society treats its sick and crippled, its old and its feeble-minded, is the real measure of that society's level of civilisation. It tells me that we need a society centred around good health rather than a health service snuffling after disease like a baffled bloodhound. It tells me not that the NHS has failed, but that it has not been given a real chance.

This is an edited extract from "The National Health: a radical perspective" (Hogarth Press, £7.95).

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The fog of war

Flight 655 blundered into disaster. Or did it? Alexander Cockburn examines the official US version of the Iranian Airbus atrocity

Not for the first time in the career of the Reagan administration, physical disaster and political setback have come in the form of a ball of fire in the heavens, followed by the grim culling of human remains and mechanical debris from the sea.

The explosion of the space shuttle *Challenger* spelled the end of the heroic phase of a space fantasy engendered in the Kennedy era. And if some blame for that catastrophe attaches to the political pressures surrounding NASA's eagerness to get the shuttle up in time for President Reagan's 1986 State of the Union message, the direct cause lay in the contractual procedures and bottom-line priorities of the aerospace industry and their contracting opposite numbers in government.

The destruction of Flight 655 provokes a similar set of consequences and conclusions: the definitive end of a particularly high-strutting phase of American moral self-righteousness, stoked to white heat in the post-Afghanistan invasion period by the downing of KAL 007; attachment of blame to the US government for getting the missile cruiser *Vincennes* into those troubled waters in the first place; allocation of most responsibility to the military-industrial complex that produced the equipment responsible for the entirely avoidable loss of 290 lives and one A-300 Airbus.

In the hours following the shooting down of the Airbus at 10.54am Persian Gulf time on 3 July, both the US government and press acted in fairly predictable fashion. Following an interval of nine hours after either one or two Standard surface-to-air missiles disposed of the target, Admiral William J Crowe, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, proposed the official line, which was that the Iranians—those flying the Airbus and those who let the Airbus fly between Bandar Abbas and Dubai under such conditions—brought it on themselves. The Airbus was off course. It was descending towards the *Vincennes* on a presumptively hostile flight path. Its transponder, designed to identify its tail number and civilian status and course, was not switched on. The crew failed to respond to seven distinct warnings on both civilian and military radio channels. There were electronic indications suggesting that an F-14 attack was starting.

On such an analysis, regrets but not apologies were in order—and this, so far, has been the posture adopted by the Reagan administration. The press, mostly performing its fundamental role of offering support to government and reassurance to the public, has duly followed along. Robert McFadden's story in the *New York Times* for 4 July began with the words: "The Iranian jetliner shot down in the Persian Gulf yesterday by an American warship apparently failed to observe many of the precautions deemed necessary in a war zone, according to Western aviation experts." Another story by Stephen Engelberg, in the same edition of the *Times*, quoted that familiar standby, a professor of "national security studies" at Georgetown, as saying the incident suggested serious flaws in Iran's military coordination.

Lars-Erik Nelson, Washington bureau chief of the New York *Daily News*, wrote that a principal cause of the disaster was Iranian "stupidity" in allowing the Airbus to fly into "a war zone of its own making", and that so far as the US Navy was concerned, "everything—its high-tech weapons and its highly trained men—worked perfectly". The networks did their duty along the same lines, although ABC maintained some elements of reserve. Stories in the *Boston Globe* and the *Chicago Tribune* were also less obliging.

So let us work through the various elements of the official story.

An F-14 on the attack would be flying 100 knots faster than the Airbus and well below 1,000 feet

The Airbus was "off course". Yes, but by about four or five miles, which is not in the least unusual. To give a comparison, KAL 007 was 365 miles awry (and also supposedly with a non-functioning transponder) and this was not at the time taken by the Reagan administration as being an exonerating factor.

Admiral Crowe has also made much of the fact that the plane was flying at an altitude of 9,000 feet, unusually low for a commercial flight. He has also claimed that the plane had a "threatening flight profile", notably in the alleged fact that it was descending.

The admiral was correct in saying that the plane was at 9,000 feet, but this was not peculiar, given that the Airbus had taken off only seven minutes earlier, and the normal flight profile under such circumstances would have been to keep climbing steadily to 25,000 feet before levelling off and commencing the descent. The whole flight was only about 150 miles.

Assertions of a menacing descent notwithstanding, there is nothing to suggest that the Airbus was doing other than what it intended, which was to fly straight from Bandar Abbas to Dubai. It seems that the height-finding ability on all radar systems is their weakest function. The Airbus was seven minutes out from Bandar Abbas. The radar crew on the *Vincennes*, therefore, should have had it on track for six minutes after it cleared the radar horizon: in fact, they had it on screen for only four minutes, which throws suspicion on the reliability of the much-touted Aegis system.

It also suggests a panicky response, particularly since a Pentagon air combat specialist quoted by Fred Kaplan of the *Boston Globe* said that an attacking F-14 would probably be travelling "at at least 550 to 580 knots", 100 knots faster than Admiral Crowe says the Airbus was flying, and "well under 1,000 feet . . . Someone flying straight and level at 9,000 feet ain't hostile."

Much has been made of the fact that the *Vincennes* sent four warnings on a military radio channel and three on a civilian one. The military warnings are irrelevant since only a military aircraft would have been monitoring such a frequency. A common thread to such shoot-down incidents is that the attacker always claims to have given plenty of warning. It's not rare for pilots to be lazy about listening to emergency channels and they could have had the relevant equipment turned down or off. The Russians, incidentally, made similar sorts of effort to contact KAL 007.

The transponder, supposedly non-functioning on the Airbus, is an automatic device that gets queried by Air Traffic Control and responds automatically with pertinent data. The *Vincennes* was equipped with the same querying device, called the "interrogator". If transponder and interrogator are both working there can be no misidentification. The US claim that the Airbus's transponder was off has been accepted in all US press accounts, but there is no

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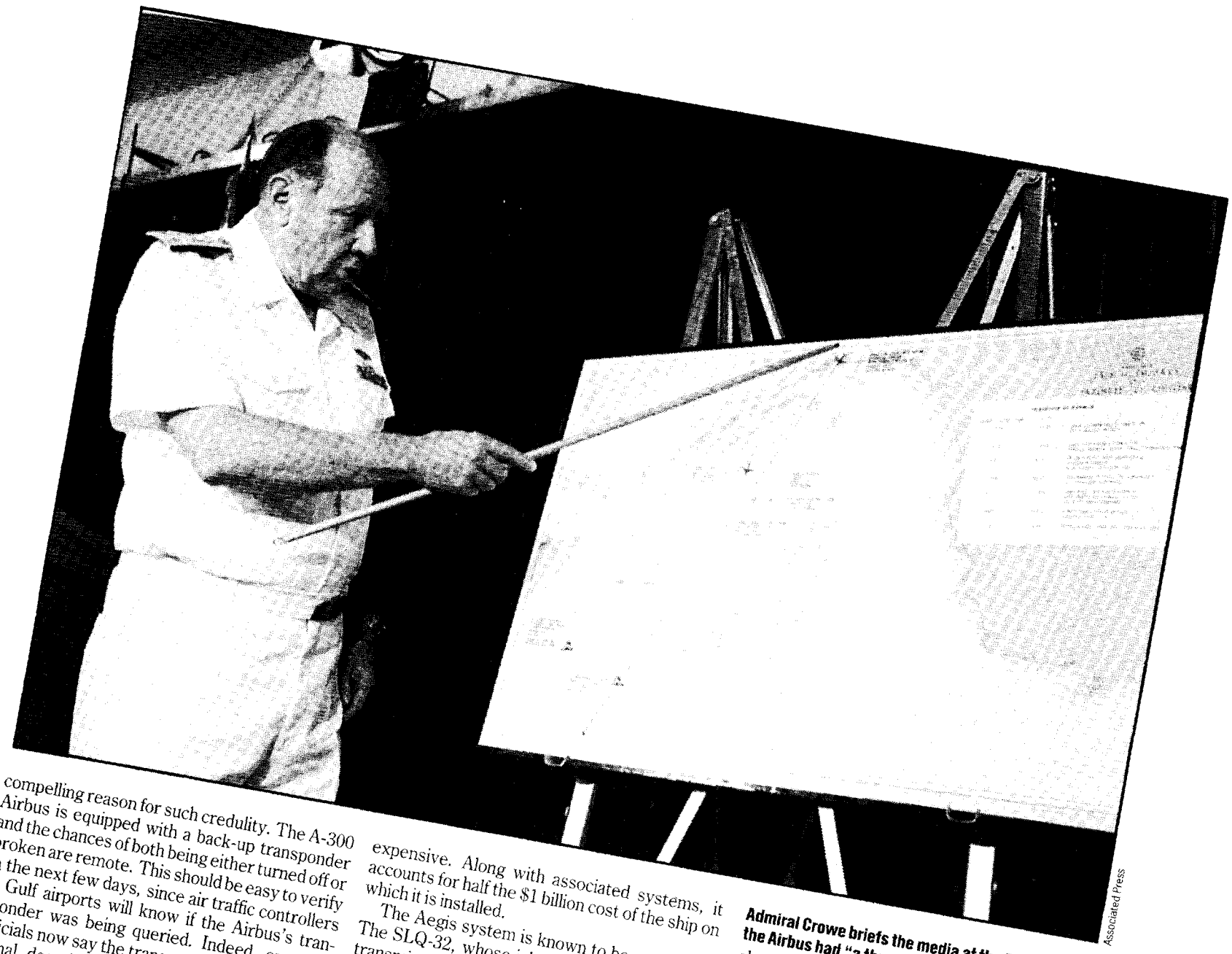

Admiral Crowe briefs the media at the Pentagon: the Airbus had "a threatening flight profile"

Associated Press

compelling reason for such credulity. The A-300 Airbus is equipped with a back-up transponder and the chances of both being either turned off or broken are remote. This should be easy to verify in the next few days, since air traffic controllers in Gulf airports will know if the Airbus's transponder was being queried. Indeed, even US officials now say the transponder was emitting a signal, described as "ambiguous", and Dubai air traffic control insists that the Airbus was ascending.

Suppose that we abandon the theory very naturally espoused by the US, that the Iranians and their Airbus were incompetent or malevolent, or both, and instead consider the theory that the *Vincennes*'s equipment was an extrusion of the corrupt, inefficient and profiteering system now under major investigation by the FBI. (Unisys, along with RCA, which worked on the relevant radar system, has been mentioned in the current scandal.)

The *Vincennes* is an Aegis-class cruiser, billed by the navy as the last word in high-tech wizardry. It is supposedly able to track and identify dozens of planes and missiles at the same time. But congressional suspicions of the Aegis radar system were once so high that the whole programme was in trouble. Just in time for a major funding vote, early in the life of the Reagan administration, a test showed miraculous results in detecting low altitude surprise attack, even though critics at the time said the actual element of "surprise" in this test was highly questionable. The joy of Aegis from the contracting point of view is that it is supremely expensive. Along with associated systems, it accounts for half the $1 billion cost of the ship on which it is installed.

The Aegis system is known to be unreliable. The SLQ-32, whose job is to sort out incoming transmissions and determine which aircraft are Friend or Foe, is also notoriously uncertain. In sum, the *Vincennes* couldn't tell the difference

A Pentagon air combat specialist said "...Someone flying straight and level at 9,000 feet ain't hostile"

between an Airbus and an F-14, despite being loaded with equipment that is meant to be the expression of high-tech war-fighting via radar screen, supposedly more reliable than a man standing on a bridge with a pair of binoculars announcing the passage of an Airbus flying south at 9,000 feet. But then, in military Keynesian terms, or in the brusquer language of the arms companies' bottom-line, binoculars don't count for much.

Another point people are not discussing is that even if the Airbus had been an F-14, this should not have provoked the speedy launching of the two Standard missiles, since the F-14 is armed for air-to-air combat and not for onslaughts on ships. Here we get to our old friend, the fog of war, and the actual circumstances of the men on the *Vincennes*. They were in the midst of an engagement with Iranian gun boats. They were no doubt also mindful of the fate of Captain Glenn Brindell of the *USS Stark*, forced to resign after an Iraqi Exocet killed 37 of his men. The Stark had an SLQ-32 which had been giving so many false alarms that it was turned off.

It's doubtful that the navy's forthcoming review of the episode will produce, at least in public, much information discomfiting to the US version. The name of the reviewing officer, Rear Admiral William Fogarty, may suggest examination of the political wisdom of the *Vincennes*'s mission. Admiral Fogarty once commanded the *USS New Jersey*, whose presence and shelling of Druse and Shia areas in Beirut contributed to the revenge mission culminating in the deaths of over 240 US marines.

To conclude with the matter of political consequence: the Reagan administration is urgently contesting the parallels being drawn between Flights 655 and 007, but there are many parallels too evident to mention. But then, in the present atmosphere of detente, President Reagan has no doubt already rescinded his view, expressed at the time, that only an Evil Empire could accomplish such a vile deed. ●

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STATE OF THE NATION

Flexi-Britain

Sheila Rowbotham

There are times when to be 5ft 3in and somewhat squeaky of voice is an undeniable disadvantage. A crowded Covent Garden bar on a Friday night is one such moment. Amazingly, a great mound of a man moved considerately so I could wiggle between his elbow and the bar to order—and listen. He was telling a young New Zealander how he had been undercut on a building contract. He grumbled about the false economy, the men taken on were working much more slowly than his gang, he had no idea of what work he would get in the future.

The New Zealander, too, was glum but consoled himself that it was not going to be his life drifting from job to job. "Well," ruminated his companion, "I don't know if I see it as being my life." There was a bewildered hurt in his northern voice.

The 1980s are nearly over and there is still a gap between the restructuring of the economy, one aspect of which is increasing flexibility in the supply and organisation of labour, and the expectations of personal destiny which accrued in the previous era. One result is a dazed bemusement which makes some trade unionists agree to concessions because it seems as if the forces of fate itself are at work. Another response is adamant opposition against all odds.

There is at present considerable bitterness between advocates of these contradictory approaches. There are understandable reasons for both. The first is formed out of the need to preserve a structure to be used in some more favourable future. It seeks survival. The second resists partly out of former habits of dignity. But also because its proponents know that economic arguments are never that simple. The apparently objective forces of the market are being helped along by legal chicanery, political influence and ideological blather. Only by standing firm can workers call the bluff which provides the cover for the restructuring of the economy.

But some of the resistance has come from a less explicitly argued source—an intractable rejection of the life this restructured economy is offering. This is what is keeping several hundred ferry workers and a handful of women's support groups out against P & O.

It is worth detailing the circumstances which make for such intransigence. The company wants them to work for 14 days on board, 24 hours on and 24 hours off. The ten hours' rest during the 24 hours on are allotted no fixed times, nor are continuous periods for sleep guaranteed. If someone does not turn up, the 24-hour shift is to be extended. Off duty workers are on call.

The company secures flexibility of labour, the workers are subject to disrupted sleep and stress, and the passengers' lives would be in the hands of a crew who can't look after the ship to their best capacity because they are working in impossible conditions. Before the *Herald of Free Enterprise* went down, most people saw crossing the Channel as a relatively unperilous event. In fact, the strikers compare it with walking across the M1. It is exceedingly congested. The shock and the shame of being blamed for the disaster has shaken many members of the National Union of Seamen. Despite the attacks on their union, they say they will not stop picketing.

In the case of the seafarers, the P & O employers' flexibility encroaches on the workers' time. Other workers like tour guides and mini-cab drivers are also required to be on call when they are not being paid.

Equal opportunities is being used to cut down women's full-time work to part-time jobs

Flexibility in the supply and organisation of labour is apparent, too, in the extension of contracting. This has been well documented in the resistance to privatisation in public services. But it is appearing in private industry, too. A firm called Extra Staff is currently advertising an engaging group of workers, including Keith, "bricklayer", Patricia, "production worker", Urmilia, "assembler", as "some of our most sought after temps".

At the Women and Economy Conference in London this May (papers are available from the Women's Studies Unit, 383 Holloway Road, London N7) Ruth Elliot pointed out how management in the civil service, local government and the health service have used equal opportunities vocabulary and issues and feminist arguments for flexibility between work and home to cut women's full-time work down to part-time jobs, split shifts into unsocial hours and contract out jobs in the interests of flexibility.

She observes that feminists were repeating the demands of the 1970s in the transformed circumstances of the 1980s where they had a different social meaning. Flexibility is not a neutral concept. It requires asking whose interests are being served in specific contexts.

Yet another kind of flexibility was detailed in a trade union workshop at the Chesterfield socialist conference in June. The core workers in industry were being pressured to accept multi-skilling. There is a similar dilemma here. Former radical assumptions are being turned upside down. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, progressive educationists argued that working-class people should be able to switch skills in their own interests. And as a clothing worker pointed out at Chesterfield, the exchange and sharing of skills has always been part of the vision of socialism.

It is true not all these developments are entirely new and have depended on the degree of control by workers in a sector. As a hotel worker told the engineers and car workers at Chesterfield, "We've always had flexibility. When I was working in Bournemouth, I had to be a porter one minute and a waiter the next." However, their acceleration has been so rapid in the last few years that many individual unionists have been psychologically stunned. Moreover, there appears to be no concerted strategy which could prevent isolated resistance being broken or privileged groups making a deal at the expense of other workers. It's not only that the old terms of reference no longer apply. There is an extreme diversity between regions and groups of workers which means that trade unions and workers need to consider specific changes on their merits.

There is a deeper crisis, too, in the lack of any more equitable and coherent alternative. The industrial revolution generated an opposing vision of economic development among large numbers of workers which was fiercely debated among Owenites and Chartists. The changes of the late 19th and early 20th centuries created not only socialism and syndicalism, but welfare economics and Keynesianism.

How is this desire of capital for flexibility of labour to be turned around so that people's work could be more creative and responsive to human need? How is the economy to be re-shaped democratically in the interests of the many who labour? As far as I can ascertain, neither revolutionary nor reformist socialists know at present the answer to these questions any more than my bemused and battered giant at the bar.

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LETTERS

Neighbourhood watches

A response is needed to Judy Hirst's fanciful piece concerning neighbourhood watch in *New Society* (24 June).

The Bennett report, which she refers to as supporting evidence for the postulate that watches are inefficient, was actually based only on research in two extremely untypical watch areas. Yet even Dr Bennett himself is on record as saying that he would be the first to join a watch if one were started in his street: his report is not so much "against" watches as ambiguous about the ones he studied himself. In fact I have at my disposal a range of figures showing that watches, when they are properly run, actually *do* work.

Furthermore, Ms Hirst's extremely offensive allegations of racism are not supported by anything that would pass as evidence in a court of law, or for that matter, in a saloon bar. Black and Asian people do participate in watches, despite attempts by the polyocracy to dissuade them from so doing. We encourage people of all political views to work with us, yet it is a fact that some of the old-fashioned municipal left dislike us because we are genuinely democratic, and because watches take power away from authoritarian and centrist town halls.

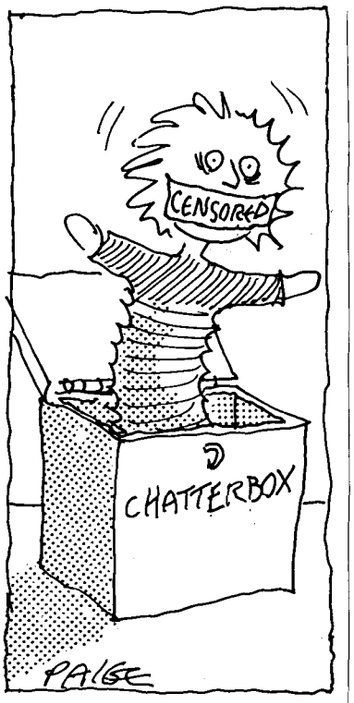
Alan Blows
Committee chairman
LAW (London Association of Neighbourhood Watches)

Language barriers

This Conservative government has been adept at manipulating the English language so that its vengeful projects can be equated with "freedom", "reform", and even "compassion".

Never did I expect that *New Statesman* would (unwittingly) make it easier for it by deploying the term "chattering classes" at the head of Bernard Crick's article (24 June) about growing doubts over the Kinnock leadership.

Like "so-called intellectuals", "chattering classes" is a term of abuse for media people and academics who are either "too clever by half" or else "too noisy for their own good", and who think that they have some self-ordained right to pass judgment on the government of the day. It first gained widespread notoriety in January when Margaret



Thatcher said on *Panorama* that ordinary people were much more in tune with her policies on security and censorship than were those who made up the chattering classes.

When critical and informed opinion is mocked even in a lead-in to an article, then another of the checks restraining government from tyrannical action seems in jeopardy. Quite frankly, if there had *not* been a welter of speculation about whether Mr Kinnock has the vision and intellectual capacity to go on leading Labour, after the events of the past month, I would have been worried.

Tom Gallagher
Bradford

Unhappy portrait

I have rarely seen as many mistakes in one short piece as there are in Amanda Sebestyen's twittish attack on *Modern Painters* (Print, *NSS*, 17 June).

For example, Sebestyen says I have argued "that only the English have really *understood* Picasso". I would like to ask her, where? I don't believe this (or anything like it). My editorial on "Picasso in England" was based on the unoriginal argument that the English were especially slow in coming to terms with this great painter; in fact, only a handful of artists, here, understood what he was about.

Sebestyen also accuses me of trying to turn cubism into "a new form of Victorian uplift". In fact, I was concerned to refute the view that cubism is the visual equivalent of Einstein's physics or of dialectical materialism. But, once again, my position is hardly as quirky as Sebestyen makes out. No informed students of cubism—except perhaps dear old John Berger—believe there is such a connection any more.

But Sebestyen manages to get almost *nothing* right. She is so carried away with her comparison of myself to F R Leavis and *Modern Painters* to *Scrutiny* that she argues that my magazine is already stuffed with the writings of "followers" who in issue two have moved upfront from the back of the journal to write "longer and worse" than last time.

This is sheer fantasy. None of the writers who contributed to the first review section is writing in the front of issue two. And just *who* among the cast of feature writers in this issue could possibly be described as a down-beat "Fullerite" follower? Patrick Heron? Richard Wollheim? Leon Krier? Elaine Feinstein? Howard Jacobson? Waldemar Januszczak?

And just what is Sebestyen trying to imply when she writes that our reviewers have descended into "a ruck of seconded *Spectator* and *Literary Review* types"? Among our reviewers, Harriet Waugh has written for both journals, and Tanya Harrod contributes regularly to the former. There were 21 other reviewers in issue two who to the best of my knowledge rarely, if ever, contribute to either publication.

Finally, I resent Sebestyen's argument that *Modern Painters* is a journal of the right. This is not true. Some of those who write for us are of the right; others of the left. If we stand for anything, it is for the defence of the fine arts, the critical imagination and the aesthetic dimension. These are prerogatives of neither side of the political spectrum.

Peter Fuller
Editor
Modern Painters

Spiv culture

I do hope you will rise above the gee whiz school of journalistic examination of "black culture" and, by implication, popular music generally, as typified by Cynthia Rose's uncritical piece "Thriving by night" (*NSS*, 17 June).

The fact that the various phenomena which were written about are actually based on *theft* does not seem to bother Ms Rose or you one scrap. Not one note of irony was detectable. The euphemism "unofficial" for illegal says it all.

Now I know perfectly well that an enormous sense of frustration exists in the black popular music community as a result of what it considers to be exclusion by the broadcasting, recording and arts establishments. These frustrations have been articulated often enough by the Black Music Association, for example, but to elevate the creators of a spiv culture (yes, I know that is a quaint word but it is hard to think of another) rather than seeking constructive answers, which will inevitably be "dull" to the journalist, to the problems which *all* creative popular musicians face, is depressing in a journal with *NSS's* stated goals.

Brian Blain
Music Promotion Committee
Musicians' Union

S'nown to man

In reply to eight year old Gemma Hutton's letter to *NSS*, I should like to point out that there is a very real difference between snowmen and snow women—snowballs.

Tom Cutler (age 29)
London N10

New Statesboddies

Your correspondent Gemma Hutton (aged eight) asks why *New Statesman and Society* has not adopted a non-sexist title following its recent revamp.

May I suggest you incorporate a solution recently mooted in the letters page of the *Guardian* by making use of the term "bod": thus, we could now be reading the *New Statesbod and Society*.

But the real reason I wanted to write to you was to congratulate you on the most profound and significant change from your revamp. After all these years, you have at last managed to shake off the maundering and omnipresent Blavatsky Trust. Brilliant. Well done.

David Northmore (age 28)
London N4

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POLITICAL COLUMN

Reluctant powers

Empires are unfashionable, but shedding them is harder than acquiring them

Stephen Howe

Running an empire is no fun. Direct physical control of territories outside one's own is almost invariably nowadays a financial burden rather than an asset, whatever may have been the case a century ago. It seems certain that not one of the remaining scattered British or French colonies brings in a profit to the owner's exchequer. Maintaining client states—the main mode of "informal empire" in the modern world—also seems usually to be an expensive business. Not even the bitterest critic of American policy in Vietnam, or the Philippines, or Grenada would suggest that the US Treasury returned a profit on the deals. The Soviet Union's junior partners in Eastern Europe, still more in Cuba, are subsidised from Moscow, not vice versa: though trying to convince any Pole on this point is an unrewarding business. And when Soviet troops went into Afghanistan, the *Guardian's* Jonathan Steele reports that overheard in a Moscow bus queue was the grumble, "Now we'll have to feed them too!"

A hard look at the balance-sheet of empire, of the sort Macmillan took before he started talking about winds of change, helps explain why colonies have now long been unfashionable. Ever since the second world war, the trend has been towards new and less direct ways of exerting influence. The problem for great powers is that the repertoire of such means has always been rather limited, and all of them can get one involved in disastrous entanglements.

Recent weeks have seen both superpowers facing most of the possible variants. The most obvious, and in the abstract perhaps least objectionable, kind of informal imperium is that exercised by a country seeking to protect its interests and those of its friends by taking on a policing role in regional conflicts. What that can lead to, especially when those charged with the task mix it with visceral hatred for one of the regional actors and with misplaced faith in their military hardware, has been horribly demonstrated this week. But what Reagan—now not so much a lame-duck President as a dead albatross—encounters in the Gulf is almost trivial compared with what Gorbachev has on his hands in Afghanistan.

Only a very strong—perhaps only a globally dominant—power can sustain informal empire in the long run. Direct political rule requires a range of at least minimally competent, trustworthy local allies. The exercise of indirect domination needs them even more, and needs more of them: one must work through people with *some* claim to local legitimacy.

Bluntly, one needs to be able to buy such people, offering direct subsidies, or links of trade, aid and investment that will woo them to one's side, or access to cultural capital that confers local prestige (the French have been rather good at using this in their former colonies), or at the very least the weapons that will keep them in power when all else fails. The Americans can offer all these, and *still* fail to maintain stable spheres of influence. The Soviets can provide only the last. No wonder they haven't been very successful imperialists, and have almost always been wise enough not to try joining this global Dangerous Sports Club.

Apart from Kalashnikovs, the Soviet Union has had one other commodity deemed suitable for third world export: an ideology. As Gorbachev clearly recognises, though, this has not only long outlived its usefulness at home but, in the export model, has rebounded with disastrous effects on the original manufacturer. In the most intimate and revealing account of the Afghan revolution yet produced, exiled Pakistani writer Raja Anwar indicates why this is so. *The Tragedy of Afghanistan* (published next week by Verso at £17.95) presents a picture of the Afghan Communist leaders—on whom Anwar gained unique insights by sharing prison cells with many of them for almost three years—that is almost surreal in its grotesqueness.

Only a very strong—perhaps only a globally dominant—power can sustain informal empire in the long run

The most vivid sense is of men of power stumbling to disaster, utterly disconnected from political reality and from the feelings of the people they claimed to serve. Seeking to drive through a militaristic revolution from above in a country where very few supported their ideals, while themselves splintered with doctrinal, tribal and personal rivalries, the Afghan Marxists were at best an embarrassment, at worst a disaster for their ever more reluctant Moscow sponsors. In Afghanistan, as in many third world countries, exported Marxism-Leninism turned into something possibly even worse than the Stalinism of which it was an offshoot: a sort of Pol Pot International.

Since Gorbachev's accession to power, if not before, the Soviet Union has been looking for a way to cut its losses and get out of Afghanistan. No one now doubts that going in was a hideous miscalculation. The decision was reached in a muddled, fundamentally lazy way: the deepest and most damaging expression of the stagnation of the late Brezhnev years. Soviet leaders were consistently misled by their local clients while their own men on the spot were split, the KGB supporting one Afghan faction, the "real" diplomats another. The Politburo was also deeply divided on intervention, though no one seems yet to know who voted which way. One interesting suggestion is that President (then Foreign Minister) Andrei Gromyko was a key advocate of the invasion, and that awareness of this fuelled the calls for his resignation last week.

Gorbachev's real horror is that he can't withdraw his troops with any assurance that a stable or acceptable regime will be left behind, even if the Americans and *their* Pakistani clients are prepared to work at getting him off the hook. Anwar, speaking from his Frankfurt exile home this week, held out next to no hope that anything other than mass slaughter could follow withdrawal.

The only person who could possibly command wide assent to head a national government is King Zahir Shah, now living in Italy; and it is on him that the Russians pin their hopes. Yet important factions in both Communist and Mujahideen camps won't have him at any price. Far more likely is immediate descent into chaos: "It is doubtful if even an agreed interim government will be able to stop the bloodbath." The Russians can't run an empire, and Gorbachev, unlike some of his predecessors, knows it. He will find, as previous "reluctant imperialists" have done, that getting rid of colonies is considerably more difficult than acquiring them, and maybe even more dangerous than keeping them.

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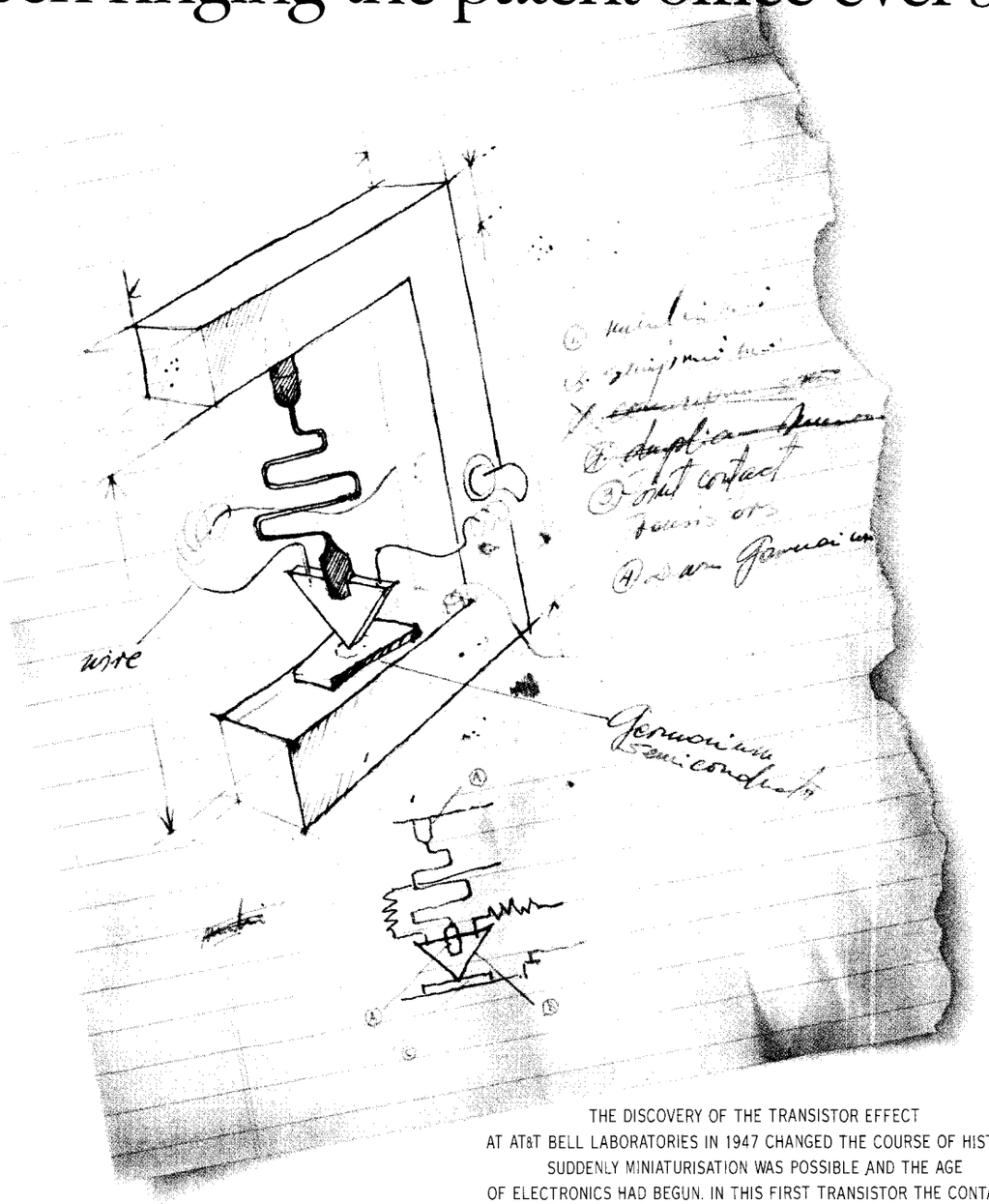

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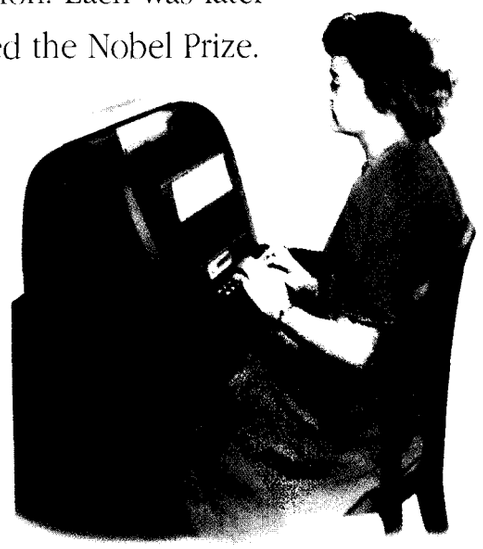

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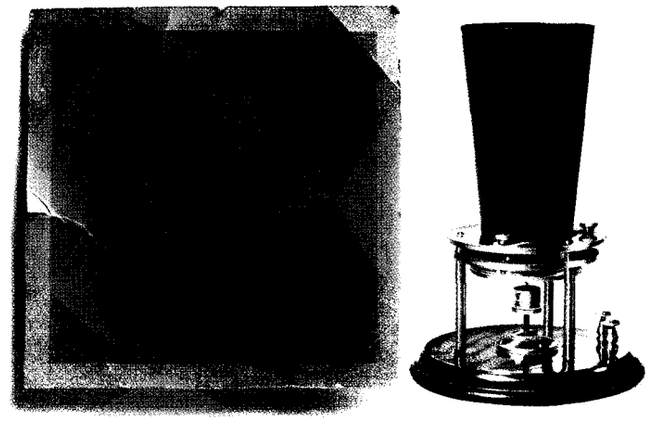

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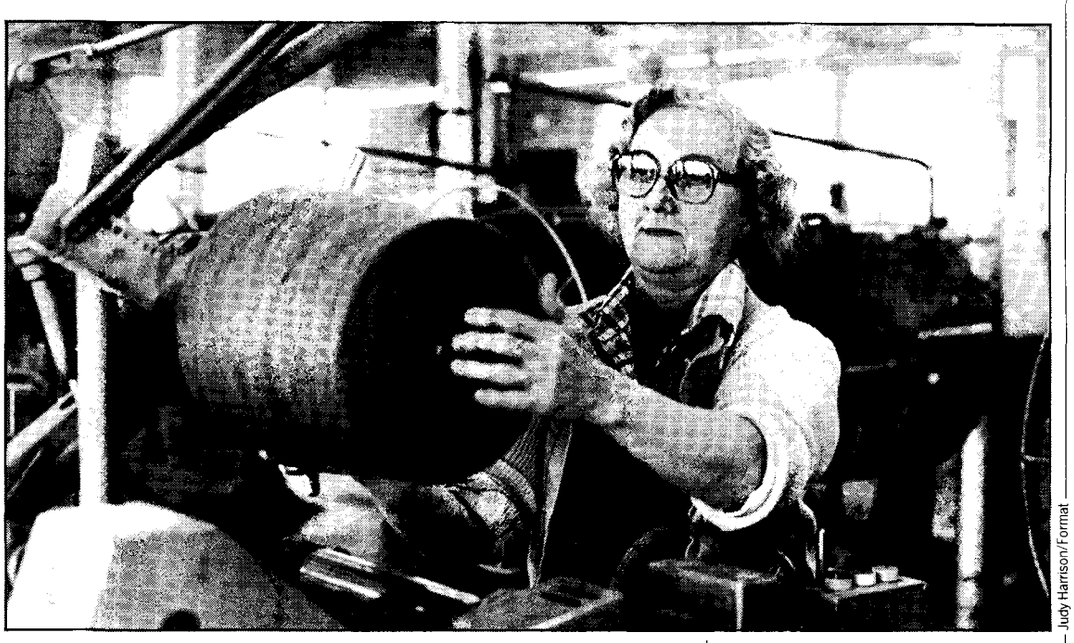
The "alternatives" that hold women down

Most non-Thatcherite economic strategies do nothing to promote sex equality at work. We can do better, says Anne Phillips

There was a time when Thatcherite economics looked like the market gone mad: unemployment rising daily, manufacturing output dropping to an unprecedented low, the cost of keeping people *out* of work leaping to absurd heights. As each more damning statistic was released, we could take some comfort from the very scale of the madness, for who could credit that something like this would retain popular support? It did, of course, and bewilderment turned to exasperation, and then finally into a more subtle critique. Even allowing for the distortion of government statistics, productivity growth is now (it seems) back on course, unemployment is now, (it seems) falling, and while analysts debate the scale of poverty, the real incomes of those in full-time employment are unquestionably going up. The issue is not whether Tory policies "work": for certain sectors and groups they unquestionably do. The question is whether something else could work better—for longer and on a more equal basis.

The position of women is a particularly pertinent starting point for exploring the answers, for it encapsulates a general trend. Women's participation in paid employment has continued to rise throughout the years of Thatcher's "miracle", and for those in professional or managerial employment there have been considerable gains. Real incomes have risen, and there has been a slow but steady encroachment on areas of previous male power. But then the consistency with which women's hourly earnings hover at around 70 per cent of men's masks a growing inequality within the female workforce. In the areas of greatest expansion—part-time, largely low skill manual jobs—women's pay has *not* been rising in line with the average. The growing polarisation within the labour force as a whole is reflected in a growing polarisation among women, and sadly, the growth in female employment has been at the price of more inequality.



Judy Harrison/Format

"There have been plenty of restructurings that have built the old patterns right back into the new."

All the "alternative" economic policies promise an overall increase in the number of jobs. But to what extent do they combine this with a vision of sexual equality—or any other equality for that matter? From the limited range on offer—and in truth there is a dearth of imaginative ideas—there is one theme that cries out for attention. Scenarios for expansion divide broadly into those that envisage more jobs in the low-paid, low-skill sector, and those that deal with a radical restructuring and a reskilling of jobs. Either route has consequences for women.

The "centrist" alternative to government policy falls largely within the low pay, low skill camp. Drawing on economists and politicians from all the major parties (like Richard Layard, who advised the SDP, David Metcalf who advised the Labour Party, and the all-party Employment Institute, which had Edward Heath as a founding member) this has set the terms for much of the subsequent debate. But while sharply critical of high unemployment, and confident that alternatives exist, the arguments have tended to follow well-worn tracks. How to reduce unemployment without increasing inflation? The centrist camp accepts that there *is* a trade-off here (which is of course what the government says) and that too much reflation will push up wages, reduce profit levels, hamper international competition, and in the end make us all worse off.

The solution offered by the centrists is therefore partial. If reflation is *targetted*, it can sidestep most of the problems. Direct the expansionary programmes to those regions and groups where there is a clear excess of labour—the long term unemployed, for example, construction workers, and NHS ancillary workers. Target the "lower end" of the market—sectors where there are no skill shortages because the jobs don't call for too many skills—and employment will rise without the inflation.

It is of course a remarkably unadventurous policy, though it gains some sympathy by focusing on the plight of the long-term unemployed. But while it challenges the inequality between those in jobs and those without, it only substitutes that further inequality between those in high paid and low paid work. This second inequality is just taken for granted—indeed the entire stategy is premised on the fact that some people will work for what others dismiss as poverty wages. As the main source of low paid workers, women could certainly expect to get a lot of these jobs—and in this sense the strategy could work in their favour. But in terms of tackling inequality (either between women and women, or more profoundly, between women and men) this road leads nowhere at all.

The second camp takes restructuring as its central concern. Typically arguing that capitalism is in

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a period of transition, it points to new opportunities for changing the patterns of work. In some of the initiatives that came out of the GLC Economic Policy Unit, for example, this was expressed as the end of the "Fordist" era. The phase of standardised mass production is breaking up—partly under the impact of new technology that allows firms to operate with smaller scale batch production; partly because of changing consumer demand that now looks to variety instead of standardised design. (The buzz phrase here is "flexible specialisation".) If the economy of the future is to depend on rapid response to shifting technology and demand, it needs *more* rather than less specialisation. The retraining or "reskilling" of workers, the wider dissemination of production and marketing knowledge, the breaking down of previous demarcation lines between workers and management: all these point to a radically altered division of labour—and new spaces for women to enter.

This particular version of "upmarket restructuring" may or may not get it right. But whatever the specifics, the underlying themes must be the ones to pursue. An alternative strategy based around restructuring is more likely to benefit women. At a minimum, it calls into question existing pattern of employment, and gives us the chance to break age-old equations of white men with skilled labour, and white women and black people with the rest. "Chance" not necessity: there have been plenty of restructurings that have built the old patterns right back into the new. But policies that tackle levels of skill as well as numbers of jobs offer much more hope for the future.

As average real incomes rise (recent figures indicate a trend towards a 9 per cent annual rise) we can anticipate another round of warnings about the trade-off between jobs and inflation. Unless critics of current policy take care, they may find themselves boxed into the less adventurous camp. But expansion based on low paid and unskilled work can only be a policy of despair. It would create more jobs—never to be sniffed at—but these would hardly be jobs with a future. For the women already getting such work, it would only offer more of the same.

Most damning of all, such a policy takes the inequalities that are growing in the economy as a whole and reaffirms them as the only way to expand. Strategies for the future have to bring together what is possible with what is desirable: we certainly need a lot more work on the former, but on the latter there should be no room for doubt.

When quarter of a loaf is worse than none

James Stephenson explains why unions and voluntary organisations are divided over the government's new Employment Training plans

At first glance the Employment Training Scheme, to be launched in September, appears to be an improvement upon previous schemes — like the community programme and the job training schemes—which it replaces. It's not obvious why it should have attracted such hostility from some trade unions and voluntary organisations.

Under the new arrangements training agents will draw up a dynamically titled *personal action plan* for each trainee. Training managers will then take over, helping people to achieve these plans. Government, as now, will not itself provide the places. Its role, through the Training Commission, is to approve putative agents and managers, and provide the money.

In addition to this streamlined management, the scheme is intended for people who have been unemployed for more than six months. Special preference is to be given to 18 to 24 year olds and anyone under 50 years old who has been out of work for more than two years.

The body with responsibility for the scheme has even purged itself of symbolic sexism, changing from the Manpower Services Commission into the Training Commission when the 1988 Employment Act received the royal assent in May.

But the new scheme has its drawbacks. The £1.4 billion budget for Employment Training is no more than the scheme's predecessors received. Then there's the problem that targetting the long-term unemployed removes the symptom without addressing the disease. The government's glossy brochure says that options for people leaving the scheme "include a job, self-employment, voluntary activity or further education". A further possibility not mentioned is that trainees may find themselves back on the dole.

This won't help the people on the scheme, but it will help massage the figures for the long-term unemployed, since trainees returning to the dole are classified as *newly* unemployed. It also, of course, reduces the total unemployment figures: in April, the Unemployment Unit found that the unemployment total was 256,770 lower than it would have been if it included people on training schemes.

Yet figure fiddling does not explain the trade union rupture over Employment Training. The TUC general council gave its conditional support to the scheme, after a last minute switch by the General, Municipal and Boilermakers. But the Transport and General union, together with the Nalgo and Nupe, are against the scheme. Ron Todd, the T&G's general secretary, resigned as one of the three union commissioners on the MSC, and the 45 Transport and General representatives on area manpower boards followed suit.

> *"At the heart of the dispute lies a tactical rather than a principled disagreement. Most unions have strong reservations about the proposals.*

At the heart of the dispute lies a tactical rather than a principled disagreement. Most unions have strong reservations about the proposals. The GMB for instance has given Employment Training only a "highly critical conditional support". John Edmonds, the union's general secretary, has threatened to "dump it in December".

TUC reaction to the proposals has been governed by five principles. The rate for the job, quality training, employment protection, union involvement and voluntary participation.

The TUC is whistling in the dark with several of these. The *rate for the job*—intended to protect real jobs—is not an attainable objective. Benefit plus £10 to £12 and extra allowances is all that is on offer.

Union involvement is to be reduced not increased. Under the Community Programme, unions have a right of veto over particular schemes. They will only advise under Employment Training.

But the greatest bone of contention is the voluntary nature of the scheme. Norman Fowler, the secretary of state for employment, wrote to Norman Willis, TUC general secretary, confirming that the scheme would be voluntary. However, the Youth Training Scheme is also described as voluntary. People who refuse to participate just lose benefit entitlement.

Fowler has made it clear that he does not intend to apply benefit penalties to those who turn down places on the new scheme. But section 26 of the 1988 Employment Act widening the grounds for denying benefit lurks ready and waiting. The scheme could in future be "designated" for social security purposes. People would then be regarded as voluntarily unemployed under section 26 if they:

- lost a place on a programme through misconduct or leaving without good cause;
- did not apply for a place on a programme where a vacancy has been notified;
- refused a place when offered;
- did not take a reasonable opportunity to go on a programme.

The unions have had to weigh their hostility to Employment Traning against the value of continued participation in one of the few remaining forums of tripartism. This is a dwindling asset—the government is not known for heeding union views. What is more, employers are to be given up to six additional members on the commission.

Half a loaf is better than none. But the unions may feel that they already have half a loaf with the existing schemes. The true choice is between quarter of a loaf and none and that makes the decision a lot more difficult.

The Transport and General union and its allies may not be able to cripple the scheme. John Cope, the junior employment minister told MPs that 2,000 organisations had put in bids for 700,000 places. when only 300,000 are needed.

But there is also deep disquiet among voluntary organisations, particularly about the funding arrangements. Part of the income for training managers is supposed to come from employers paying to take trainees for work placements. Voluntary organisations are afraid that these placements will not be forthcoming. This would make it impossible to balance the books. Many schemes would simply go to the wall. The National Council for Voluntary Organisations points out that making a bid keeps an organisation's options open. It does not mean they will take part when push comes to shove.

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Lonely scientists' cry for help

What is the difference between this group: electro-oculogram; Langston field; Horowitz space; Ordzian ray detector — and this group: oculomotor; scalar field; medullary ray; germanium radiation detector? The answer, of course, is that the first are all to be found in science fiction, and the second in a science dictionary. *But how many people reading the list knew the answer?*

Probably not many, if what scientists, speaking at the Council for Science and Society's conference last week, say is true. We live in a world, according to Professor Martin Rees (Institute of Astronomy, Cambridge), where newspapers can't even rely on their readers knowing "the difference between a proton and a protein".

But there are changes taking place, and the title of the conference reflected this concern: "The Value of 'Useless' Research". Scientific research is now under attack through cuts in funding and a shift away from "big" science towards applied science that can yield a fast return on investment. Already University Grants Committee expenditure on research looks set to drop by £200,000 (1985-86 prices) between 1988-89 and 1989-90, according to the 1987 *Annual Review of Government Funded R & D*. As a result the information gap between scientists and public is one that the former are beginning to regret. Scientists now exhibit less contempt for colleagues who write popular books. Cambridge physicist Stephen Hawking's latest book *A Brief History of Time* has now surpassed Michael Jackson's autobiography in the US bestseller lists.

Dr Peter Mitchell (Glynn Research Foundation, Bodmin), summed up the feelings of all: scientific research would be more popular and better supported by the government if its cultural worth was appreciated and its importance to humanity recognised. Society must also appreciate the long-term nature of some research, stressed Professor Peter Mathias (Master, Downing College, Cambridge), which will require public funding on a large scale. It was, for example, nearly 30 years after the discovery of DNA before any commercial application was possible.

Scientists have always been given respect. Now they want understanding as well. *Leonora Casement*

Life is still too cheap

Congratulations. As of last week your life is worth an extra £217,000. Peter Bottomley, the Roads and Traffic minister, proposes to place a new value on the head of each British man, woman and child, of £500,000.

The significance of Bottomley's re-evaluation is that it will now become more cost-effective to carry out small-scale road improvements which reduce the risk of accidents. So it will be easier to argue for accident prevention schemes as against ones to widen roads or reduce congestion.

The old figures are based on the contribution which the accident victim would have made to the economy, together with a notional allowance for pain, grief and suffering. Bottomley wants to change the method, to assess instead the value people place on their own lives. But he seems to be underestimating this. A 1976 study of air safety suggested that people valued their lives at about £7 million; and even the government's own research suggests a mean figure of £1.5 million and a median of £890,000. These figures are arguably too low anyway, because they ignore the value we attach to *other people's* lives.

The clear undervaluation is apparently based on the government's "present concern for speedy traffic movement". Bottomley baldly states that "experts [not named] whom the department consulted informally have indicated that they would not disagree with this valuation." *Jolyon Jenkins*

Homeless figures go through the roof

Shelter, the pressure group for the homeless, held its annual conference in Manchester last week to highlight the fact that "official homelessness" there had risen by an unprecedented 45 per cent between the first quarter of 1987 and the first quarter of 1988.

This startling statistic, published in June by the Department of the Environment, has led to the DoE's "looking very carefully" (their phrase) into how Manchester City Council is compiling its figures and the local press into making accusations of a "leftie" council scoring political points.

Sorrel Brookes, principal housing officer for Manchester City Council, is at great pains to point out what is really going on. As defined by the 1985 Housing Act, local authorities have no statutory obligation to accept the responsibility for housing any homeless person unless she or he is defined as "in priority need". This is strictly defined, and you are only likely to qualify if you or your partner have children, are pregnant, elderly or handicapped, or you live with someone who is. Councils have no statutory duty to the merely homeless other than to provide "advice and appropriate assistance". This *can* extend to providing accommodation, but usually doesn't, so huge numbers of the single homeless never even bother to register with the local authority. The authority then argues, says Brookes, that "since it can't cope with the numbers, there's no point in knowing what they are".

Manchester City Council is "one of the very few councils to provide for the single homeless", and last June opened two new reception hostels for them, which allowed complete records to be kept for the first time. The 45 per cent rise in official homelessness comes about because Manchester is now taking on the responsibility for housing people who usually remain unhoused and "hidden" from the statistics. Homelessness doesn't go away by restricting the definition to exclude the single homeless, argues Brookes, and taking into account the *real* numbers of homeless people is surely what all local authorities should be doing.

Having taken the decision to tackle the problem of the single homeless, a problem which exists in all major cities, the official figures for Greater Manchester are now shooting through the roof. This is, says the DoE press office, "making it all very difficult". *Vicky Hutchings*

WELFARE WATCH

Social Fund officers still withhold maternity care loans until after the birth—an inexcusable delaying tactic

Carole H became a mother a month ago — a happy event marred only by the inept treatment of her application for a payment from the social fund. Although she applied five weeks before the birth, the money — nearly £200—had not arrived by the morning of the day she was due to be discharged from hospital. But for the intervention of a social worker, who insisted on an immediate payment for a cot and other essentials, Carole would have arrived home with nowhere to lay the baby.

Until April 1987, all mothers received a maternity grant. It was payable without contribution conditions or means test. The only snag was that, having been frozen at £25 since 1969, it was totally inadequate. So the government abolished it and substituted a grant of £80 (raised to £85 this April) from the social fund. The total cost is roughly the same because the grant now goes only to mothers on income support or family credit whose savings (including their husband's) are less than £585.

Carole qualified for the £80 grant which helped to pay for her maternity clothes, but not for the things she needed for the baby. She applied for another payment for a cot, a baby buggy and Mothercare "basic necessities pack". A computer-printed refusal arrived within days. She could not have a payment, she was told, because she had not been on income support for 26 weeks — a condition for receiving a "budgeting" loan. The possibility of a non-repayable community care grant, not subject to the 26 weeks condition, had apparently not even been considered — which is pretty odd, given that the local DHSS office only managed to spend one-fortieth of its annual grants budget in April and May.

The refusal was in fact a mistake. Carole had been on income support for 25 weeks and, as a gap of up to 14 days in the 26 week period is allowed, she satisfied the condition for a loan. But the social fund officer still refused to say how much, if anything, the loan would be and, to Carole's astonishment, insisted that the payment could not be made until after the baby was born.

This barbaric practice goes back to the days of the National Assistance Board. The Board's officers, mindful of their responsibilities to the taxpayer, used to delay making discretionary payments for maternity needs until the child was safely delivered. After all, a still-born child did not need a cot, and a separate application could be made for a coffin.

The use of such delaying tactics by social fund officers is inexcusable. The regulations allow a claim for the £85 grant, which is not repayable, to be made eleven weeks in advance. It can therefore be paid at least two months before the birth. In the case of a loan, which by definition *is* repayable and costs the taxpayer virtually nothing, there is no conceivable justification for withholding the money until after the birth. *Tony Lynes*

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INITIATIVES

Winkles that won't

Paul Fisher reports on a charity in London that helps elderly tenants resist pressure from property developers to leave their homes.

Cliff Harper

Estate agents know old people are only too delighted to tell them their age and, when they pop the friendly question to a tenant in a crumbling old house, it's the most vital piece of information they're after. In today's property market the life expectancy of sitting tenants is of more financial significance than the health of the buildings they live in.

Harry Pearson will tell you he's 77. He won't say much else because he's grown wary of strangers who come to his dingy basement flat in Fulham bearing notebook and briefcase. He moved there, aged seven, at the end of the First World War and now pays £11 a week for his two rooms. That's frustrating to his new landlord who could charge £150 a week for a gentrified flat or, more to the point, sell it for £100,000.

The owners (and he's insistent their name is not published) have offered him £10,000 to leave; they have written to the council saying "how disgraceful it is that Mr Pearson lives in such conditions"; they've sent him a notice to quit; he's endured a year of building work while the flats upstairs were converted but, to use the speculators' jargon, Mr Pearson won't be winkled. Thanks to his own obstinacy and to Staying Put for the Elderly he will probably see his days out in his flat.

"It is not just a case of a few bad apples. This is a major political problem."

Staying Put for the Elderly was started last year after a report called *I'm Not Complaining* shamed the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea into providing the bulk of its funding. Karen Smith of SHAC (The London Housing Aid Centre) revealed that old people were increasingly falling prey to speculators. In London 40 per cent of the 300,000 rented households are lived in by pensioners.

Staying Put's caseworker, John Richardson, says the aim of the organisation is explained in its title and he spends his time protecting elderly tenants from harassment.

Harassment takes many forms and the thought of being winkled out frightens most old people. In Kensington its commonest form, according to Karen Smith's researches, is the offer of money. One tenant, in a flat in Earls Court, stuck out for £40,000. Richardson says: For an old person who has been renting all their life in an area which has become so expensive, sums like that are meaningless." Then he tells of one deluded old woman who gave up her tenancy for £125.

Richardson says the main culprits are big companies. He says that tracing ownership is often very difficult (he is unsure who owns Mr Pearson's house) and doesn't want to trivialise the issue by finding new Rachmans to pin the blame on. He says: "It is not just a case of a few bad apples. This is a major political problem.

Richardson is concerned the government's Housing Bill will leave a future generation of tenants still less protected. "The new assured tenancies will reduce harassment because landlords will find it far easier to evict," he says.

But the situation is already getting worse. In 1986 Kensington Council reported 352 harassment cases and 66 illegal evictions. By 1987 these figures had increased to 827 and 124 respectively.

Staying Put for the Elderly 01-969 5129; Care and Repair 01-278 6571.

TAILGUNNER PARKINSON

"Sometimes I think: "Why the hell trouble with chronic drug abusers? They rarely or only irregularly report when on probation; invariably those who do keep in contact seek to use the relationship to get cash to feed their habit; such addiction remissions as occur rarely last long and the average junkie's ability to lie almost acquires the quality of a creative art form."

Last Monday Mary Rose called to see me. It was her 24th birthday; she has been taking drugs since she was 14. "I must give it up now," she says. "There can be no more pretence." For a moment I say nothing, somehow hoping the silence will mystically massage into her mind my total scepticism at such a hope. But she just blinks up at me like a born again abstainer.

"How often have you said exactly that, Mary Rose?" I ask.

Suddenly her face amenably moves to melancholy: "I know, I know, Mr P..."

We look at her record. Shoplifting, always shoplifting, to raise the bread for the devil-God H. As though some distraction is needed—and having once been over-dosed with psychotherapy—she starts to talk about her childhood. Her mother hadn't wanted her and had farmed her out to an aunt who'd only taken her for the maintenance money.

I listen but I don't want to get too tied down by the past. After an appropriate gap I talk about the future if drugs are not abandoned: "The court buildings are still there, Mary Rose; the graveyard always has plenty of vacancies." This dramatic recitation, like previous ones, is greeted with great enthusiasm—"Right, Mr P, right!" I feel both omnipotent and totally impotent in our relationship. So I interpret:

"Mary Rose, I suspect you always want to agree with everyone as though it were more important to keep others happy than anything else in the world."

She stares at me starkly. Then she says: "Yeah, yeah, why should that be?"

I say a few obvious things about repeating a failed need to become attached when a child, but then point out that while she tries to make people love her with her words and endless promises she is nevertheless determined to go her own way.

Predictably, she totally agrees.

"If we are to get anywhere," I affirm, "I have to know the truth about your addiction. The lying and the dream promises must finally end."

After a long pause she says: "Mr P, drugs and lies are really the same for me. I hope both will somehow bring me peace of mind."

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DATABASE

Inequalities in housing

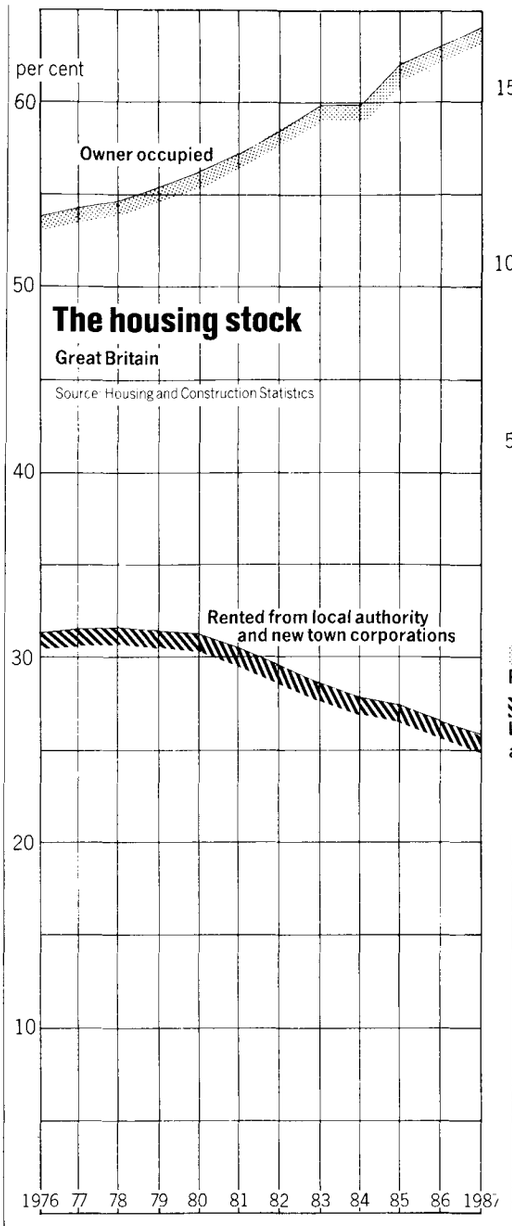
Since 1979 we have witnessed increasing polarisation in housing: a diminishing stock of council housing; an increase in private houses; higher private house prices; and more homelessness. The last two trends have been sharpest in the South — and particularly in London.

The growth in public housing stock has ended, partly because of the 1980 "right to buy" legislation. The proportion of council dwellings in Great Britain has fallen from 31 per cent of the total housing stock in 1976 to 26 per cent in 1987. But certain areas have fared very differently. In Scotland the figure fell from 54 per cent in 1976 to 48 per cent in 1987; in the North, from 40 per cent to 34 per cent; and in the South West from 22 per cent to 18 per cent.

At the same time, the growth in home ownership continues — from 54 per cent of total housing stock in 1976 to 64 per cent in 1987. In Scotland, however, it is still well under 50 per cent, having risen from 34 per cent in 1976 to 43 per cent in 1987. House prices have also varied considerably. The first quarter of 1988 saw an enormous divergence between the average house prices throughout the UK: from £80,690 in Greater London down to £27,590 (Northern Ireland), £29,093 (the North), £32,220 (Scotland) and £76,380 (South East).

The officially registered homeless figures have increased throughout England: lettings to new homeless households have risen from 17 per cent of all new secure council lettings in 1981-2 to 26 per cent in 1986-7. The same figures for Greater London show a rise from 30 per cent to 57 per cent. Taking 1985-6 as one example, the official figures show immense variation: the homeless comprised 11 per cent of all new secure council lettings in the North, 23 per cent in the South East (outside London) and 51 per cent in London. The number of households accepted as homeless has grown even faster between 1981-2 and 1985-6 by 44 per cent in England as a whole, but by *75 per cent* in London. However, while 29,000 homeless households were accepted in London (1985-6), only 16,500 made it as new secure council tenants in 1986-7, when a further 30,800 joined the list. The London Housing Unit estimated that there were also 64,000 homeless single people at the end of 1987 for whom no one is statutorily responsible.

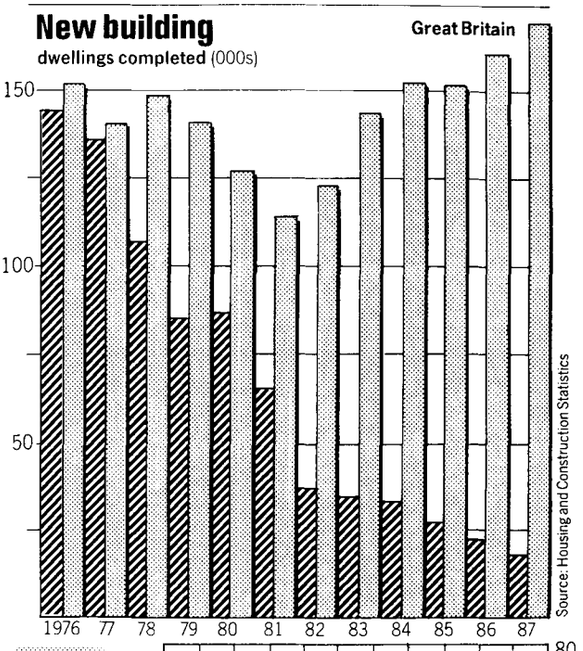
Vicky Hutchings



The housing stock

Great Britain

Source: Housing and Construction Statistics



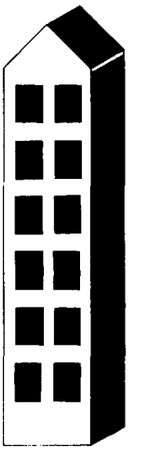
New building

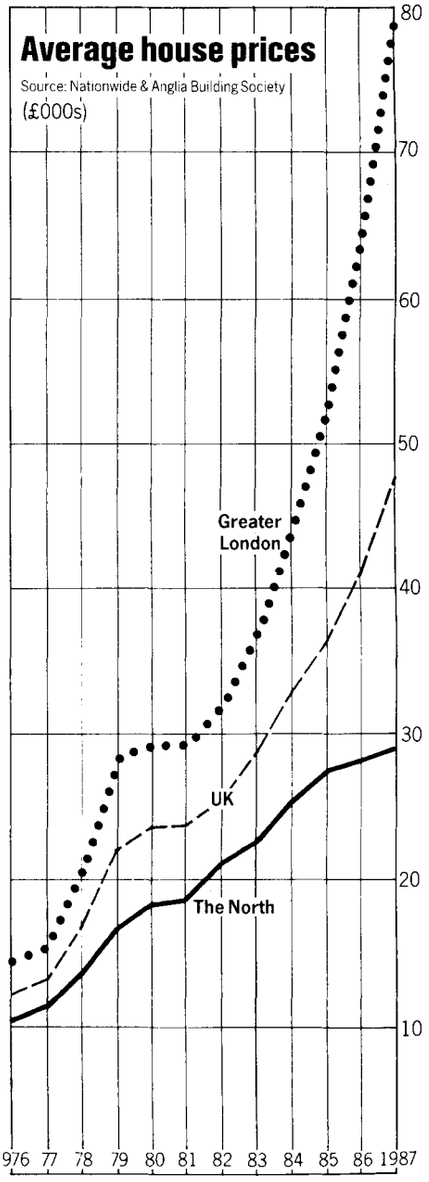
dwellings completed (000s)

Great Britain

Private sector

Local authority and new town

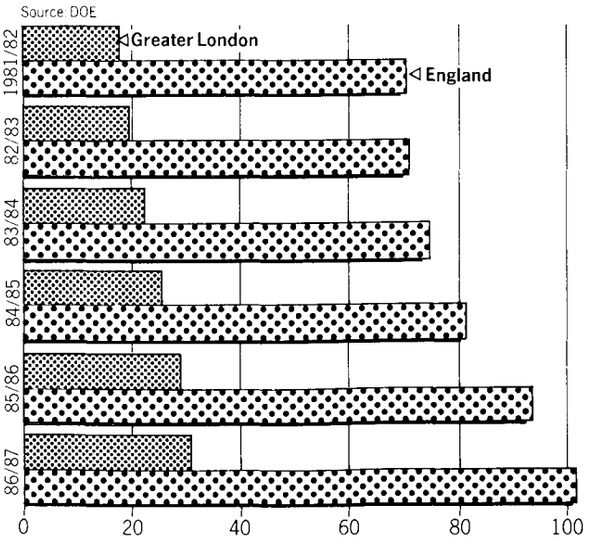




Average house prices

Source: Nationwide & Anglia Building Society

(£000s)



Homelessness

Households accepted as in need of housing (000s)

Source: DOE

Tony Garrett

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The sociology of health

Pat McNeill examines the work of epidemiologist Thomas McKeown, who died last month

Richard & Sally Greenhill

From time to time, a single individual makes such a telling challenge to the commonsense view of some aspect of social life that anyone who reads their work has their understanding transformed. Thomas McKeown, who died on 13 June, made such a contribution. Trained as a physiologist, he was the first holder of the chair of social medicine at Birmingham University, and an international figure in the science of epidemiology.

Epidemiology is the study of how diseases are distributed within and between populations. It shows how particular conditions are not randomly distributed, but rather can be shown to vary systematically in relation to such factors as class, occupation, gender, ethnicity, and region. The sociology of health takes this data further. Mainstream epidemiology retains the medical model of disease, which emphasises the related notions of the body as a machine and the treatment and cure of diseased individuals as occurring in isolation from their social environment. Sociologists direct attention to the importance of the social context and social relationships as causes of and not just variables in people's varying experience of health and ill-health. It is on this area that McKeown focused and to which he brought fresh insights.

Most people know that, in Britain today compared with the early nineteenth century, life expectancy at birth is longer, child mortality has fallen dramatically, and there has been a substantial increase in population. The commonsense view is that modern medicine can take the credit for these changes, having identified the causes of the major killer diseases. These discoveries, it is assumed, have enabled us to prevent or cure them. Indeed, much of the status of modern medicine rests on this belief. McKeown set out to examine this view, basing his argument on detailed analysis of mortality and morbidity (illness) statistics from the nineteenth century to the present, and relating these to medical developments over the same period.

Discussion topic

Why does the state concern itself with the health of its citizens? How far should it do so?

The rapid increase in population was caused in its early stages by a declining death rate, especially among young children. This decline in mortality, which started in about 1830, had several causes, but about 60 per cent of it was due to a reduction in the incidence and fatal effect of the major epidemic diseases, including typhoid, cholera, tuberculosis, scarlet fever, whooping cough and measles, which are transmitted through water, through food, and through the air. McKeown examined a number of factors, including medical progress, which might have contributed to the reduction in the impact of these diseases, and settled on three as being the most important: public hygiene (clean water supplies, effective waste disposal, better housing); contraception (which meant that fewer women died in or after childbirth, and that babies received more attention); and nutrition (a better diet, and more of it). Of these, improved nutritional standards, arising from increased production of food, are the most important, since they result in people having greater resistance to infections. Significantly, the same pattern is seen in the Third World today. Many children, particularly, die of diet-related conditions, if not of simple starvation, but many more die of diseases such as measles and diarrhoea. They just do not have the resistance that makes these diseases little more than temporary inconvenience in richer countries.

The key point that McKeown made was that most of the improvements in health and life expectancy in Britain took place *before* the 1930s, whereas most of the great breakthroughs of modern curative medicine, like the sulphonamides, antibiotics, vaccinations and so on have been introduced *since* that date. They have contributed to improved health, of course, especially between the 1930s and the 1950s, but only on a minor scale in historical terms. For McKeown the key factors in improving health have been social and environmental, not medical.

In questioning the commonsense view of the relationship between health and medicine, McKeown's work challenges the ideology that underpins the power of the medical profession. Indeed, it is the fact that this ideology has been accepted as commonsense that gives it its strength. McKeown's analysis (which has not gone unchallenged either within or outside sociology), by relegating curative, hospital-oriented and technological medicine to a minor role in terms of its contribution to improved health standards, undermines the status and power of the orthodox medical professions. He argues that the resources being allocated to medical services, especially to hospitals, are misdirected, because they are based on mistaken ideas about the basis of health. Modern medicine has resulted in "indifference to the external influence and personal behaviour which are the predominant determinants of health". (McKeown 1976).

The work of McKeown and others lies behind the growing belief, in official and lay circles, that there are more effective ways of promoting good health than by expensive technological "breakthroughs". In the poorer countries, this has resulted in the use of simple universal measures rather than investment in expensive hospitals, and in the richer countries in campaigns against smoking, for healthy eating and more exercise, "safe sex" and so on. There is, however, some difference in emphasis between the campaigns publicised by the junior health minister, Mrs Edwina Currie, and McKeown's analysis. Mrs Currie's campaigns, in line with government philosophy, emphasise the individual's responsibility for their own health, through taking exercise, eating a balanced diet, and not smoking. McKeown would of course accept these as a necessary element in preventive medicine, but would stress that some measures, such as the control of pollution, the improvement of working conditions, the urban environment, and better housing, are outside the control of the individual and should be the responsibility of the state. He says: "Past improvement has been due mainly to modification of behaviour and changes in the environment, and it is to these same influences that we must look particularly for further advance".

T. McKeown (1976): *The Modern Rise of Population*; Edward Arnold
T. McKeown (1980): *The Role of Medicine*; N.P.H.T.

D. Tuckett (1976): *An Introduction to Medical Sociology*; Tavistock.

Society Today is New Statesman and Society's weekly termtime page designed for A level and other sociology students.

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE CARE AND RESETTLEMENT OF OFFENDERS

- for the care of offenders and the prevention of crime

COMMISSION FOR RACIAL EQUALITY

The Commission has worked for racial justice over the past ten years but inequalities still persist for black people in all areas of life. This is the overall message of the CRE's Annual Report published on 21 June.

"The Commission believes that some progress has been made in combating discrimination. Institutions, employers, trade unions and members of the general public are more aware of the issues, and policies are beginning to reflect a greater concern for equal opportunities in all areas of life."

– Michael Day, **Chairman, CRE**

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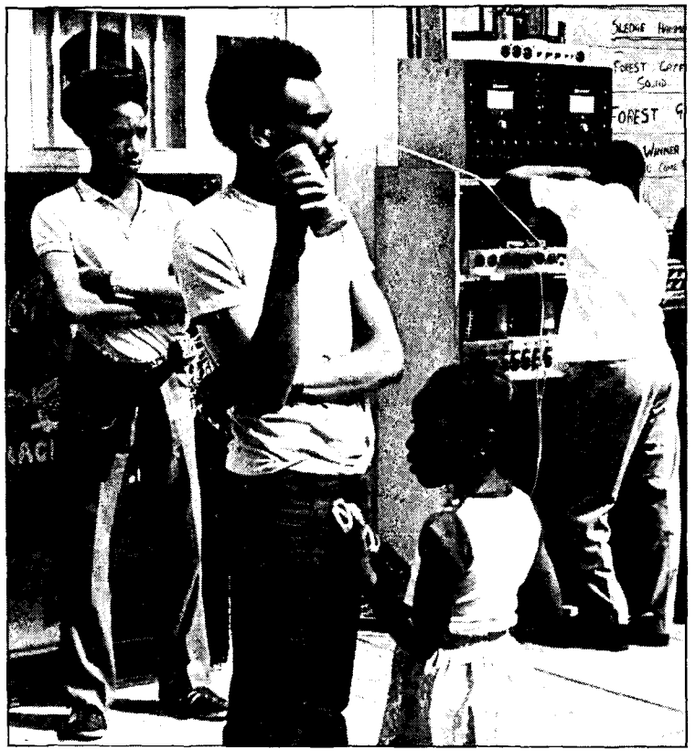
UPDATE

Pre-Carnival tension



Laurie Sparham/Network

Recent events around the Notting Hill area are producing fears that there could soon be a serious confrontation between police and the local community.

The streets around All Saint's Road—the heart of north west London's black community—are busy with a large number of police vehicles cruising around on the lookout for crime. The local people call them "war vans". Tension is high. On 21 May a special police squad raided The Mangrove Club and made 21 arrests on alleged drugs charges. This precipitated an angry public meeting at which black residents claimed the raid represented an escalation of other pressures being exerted on them.

The area is being heavily gentrified. Rumours are rife of blacks being offered large sums of money to vacate their homes for the property developers to move in. All Saint's Road has been dubbed "the cancer of the Royal Borough" by the area's more upwardly mobile inhabitants. It is in this atmosphere that people have begun talking in terms of a conspiracy between the police, the local authorities and the property developers to "get the black community out".

But the immediate concern is for the Carnival. As the media and the authorities press for tighter restrictions, there is a strong feeling that the police are seeking to intimidate the community and subdue it. Among those arrested at All Saint's Road were community activists who have been fighting to maintain the traditional status of the Carnival. Ben Bousquet, who was recently dropped as Labour candidate for the forthcoming Kensington by-election, told the meeting. "We are not under threat, we are under attack."

The meeting, which was called to discuss responses, moved from proposals for a picket of the police station and a public demonstration to more violent action. A representative of the newly-formed National Black Caucus was applauded when he argued: "To say there won't be violence if we protest peacefully is like standing in front of a truck and saying 'it won't hit me'. We must be prepared. Like in any war you must have a strategy."

Another young man told the audience: "We've exhausted every means. We've talked, we've held meetings. The only time anything constructive got done was when the youths took to the streets and burnt things down." Many of these angry, despairing young men have never had a job, and don't believe that there are peaceful solutions. A white woman from Amnesty International proposed a concerted letter-writing campaign. "It can only help," she urged. "Not in this area, luv," said the black man behind her by way of patient explanation.

Even those who most wanted to avert violence were resigned to its inevitability. "In the past when the police attacked the community we have restrained the black community from riot," said a local community worker whose brother was among those arrested in All Saint's Road. "Now we can't restrain them anymore."

David Upshal

Race attacks increase

Yet another rise in the number of race attacks in London has brought plenty of questions, but answers seem to remain as elusive as ever.

Metropolitan Police figures for 1987 show that reported "racial incidents" increased from 1,733 in 1986 to 2,179 last year—an increase of 26 per cent. The police point to an even larger increase—28 per cent—in the arrest rate, but as this figure represents a total of only 370 arrests, the picture seems far from encouraging. A group of Labour MPs, including Jeremy Corbyn and Paul Boateng, went to the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Peter Imbert, to voice what Boateng termed "our concern and alarm at the rise".

However, the police insist that matters are under control. A series of publicity initiatives has been launched over recent months to publicise the problem, in several languages. "We want to show the community," says Imbert, "that, whilst understandable, neither despair nor resentment is an effective response to racial harassment; only responsible cooperation can produce results."

The police approach seems to indicate that, like burglary, racism is a problem which is beyond their power to combat. They stress the importance of reporting such crimes rather than the solving of them. In a recent debate on the Metropolitan Police in the House of Commons, MPs repeatedly voiced the feeling that recent police initiatives were inadequate. As Jeremy Corbyn simply puts it: "There are far too many attacks and far too few arrests."

David Upshal

UPVIEW

Fighting racism—a cause for blacks and whites

Will white people in this society stop being racist because they feel that, if they don't, black tempers will erupt once more and who knows what could happen to those cute wine bars in gentrified Brixton? Self-interest of this petty kind and fear of violence cannot produce the understanding and commitment required to tackle the racism that pervades British society.

It is much more likely to create one of two responses. One is exemplified by the paranoid Terry Dicks, who always ends up calling for fatter chains and wider nets to contain the "hoodlums", and the second by "concerned" officials who scurry off rapidly to produce ever more visible, unworkable policies, just about as fierce as paper tigers.

Yet this was the point most strongly emphasised in the press coverage of the 1988 Commission for Racial Equality annual report, with headlines of the "Race riot warning" variety shrieking off the pages. It was an unfortunate focus, and did the impressive and intelligent document a disservice.

It is essential to stop playing on compassion and fear to trigger change and to present arguments in a wider context. As A. Sivanandan, Director of the Institute of Race Relations, says, the fight against racism is a "fight against injustice, inequality, against freedom for some and unfreedom for others." Racism was to be stopped from "corrupting society to decay".

That is the central message the Commission needs to put out about its work. It must re-define its image and convince the public, black and white, that it isn't

- a "colonial" mission doing mildly good works for "poor blacks";
- a hive of overactive interlopers breaching the national peace;
- a social control agency to keep blacks quiet, through effective inaction.

Even within the constraints in which the Commission is forced to operate, it can and should convey the message that it is fighting for fundamental social justice—which is important to whites as much as it is to blacks.

That kind of self interest might just work.

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Criminal injustice

How the legal system treats blacks

Britain has proportionately three times more black prisoners than white. Yasmin Alibhai looks at what can be done to curb the racism inherent in our courts, prisons and probation services

Stephen, black, 21, lives in Peckham, and has a very persuasive manner. Even when he spits venomously standing under a bridge which proclaims boldly that the world is backing Brixton. He is a one-man authority on the British criminal justice system, having sampled almost every aspect of it from the age of 15. In fact, 1987, was the first year he spent entirely unconfined since then.

"Listen lady", he croons, "what they see in me is the black devil, not just a criminal. And they get scared. I have seen their eyes change since I was 15. So they have systems which are meant to be fair and all that, but they are white and they cannot help it. And it's not just the cops you know, it's my friend the probation officer, the nice lady in prison who came to teach..."

Vivien Stern, director of the National Association for the Care and Rehabilitation of Offenders (NACRO), has no doubts about why Stephen and others like him feel the way they do. "We know that all British institutions operate in a racist way and it is no surprise to find that the criminal justice system does so also. If you examine this context you would immediately see why you have the gross disparity in the number of black people in the prison population and the treatment meted out to them in courts." The black prison population is 14 per cent, whereas black people represent 4.4 per cent of the general population.

These figures come from a recent briefing paper published by NACRO, a stimulant clearly intended to impel the authorities into action lest they forget and return to institutional torpor as they often do when race is raised. A seminal report published in 1986, "Black People and the Criminal Justice System", had already sent off ripplets through the previously unperturbed sections of the system.

The paper claims that the unacceptably high black prison population indicates that black people are unfairly treated by the system, and not that black people are more prone to crime. Further research has shown that they are more likely to go to prison, in spite of having fewer previous convictions than white offenders; less likely to be cautioned, and more likely to be prosecuted.

As far back as 1983, the Home Office statistical bulletin showed that those arrested and convicted in London included a disproportionately large number of blacks. Blacks were ten times more likely to be stopped than the average white person in London. The extensive Policy Studies Institute report on policing in London, published in 1985, showed that 63 per cent of young Afro-Caribbeans are likely to be stopped and searched by the police, as compared with 44 per cent of whites. A higher proportion of blacks are taken into custody, but more are acquitted than whites.

These statistics only signpost and confirm the deeper dynamics of the relationship between the police and the black community. The role of the police in a society is ambiguous. They are part of the social control network telling us what we can and cannot do. They can even oppress, and yet they are our saviours.

Another complexity is how society defines and relates to crime which is, quantitatively, always larger than the ability of "order" to lasso it in. This means there is a public awareness—which can be manipulated into fear—of how precarious it all becomes when there are imbalances.

Within this milieu the scope for personal power in the form of discretion and choice is very wide, as the PSI report observes: "Every police officer must constantly make decisions about which particular offences he should do something about. The way in which these decisions are taken is of paramount importance." Discretion is a central tool in this process and obviously the potential for differential behaviour is great.

And it does give credence to complaints by many young blacks that they are harassed on the streets "for no reason". There are reasons, of course. Racist stereotypes and assumptions are clearly often being made. Blacks are perceived as more dangerous criminals than whites. The recent case of race discrimination won by the CRE against the Staffordshire police is a clear example of that perception. A leaflet was passed around a neighbourhood asking people to look out for "coloureds" in the area as a crime prevention measure. There are other more serious factors that could be seen (and proved) to be operating. "Law and order", beloved rally call at every Tory party conference, is in part becoming a racist code, like "immigrant control" in the past. Both seem to mean black crime.

The Institute of Race Relations thinks the code goes further. The book *Policing Against Black People*

"What they see in me is the black devil, not just a criminal...I have seen their eyes change since I was 15"

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Benoit Jacques

published last year claims that there has been a shift from "law and order" policing to "Public Order" policing for blacks. The authors are concerned that now there is a difference in the police force between "those whom it shall serve by consent and whom control by force". This has been facilitated by a "manufacturing of consent" in the society which then can accept the way blacks are "decitizenised". The Metropolitan Police reject these allegations. But, in the end, it helps no one if large groups of people feel this dispossessed, and feel, often justifiably, that the saviour has turned bandit.

Much of the system works on common perceptual parameters anyway. As Navnit Dholakia, JP and principal officer at the CRE, says: "The problem of dealing with the criminal justice system is that we are dealing with the perceptions of people as to what's going on rather than dealing with the reality of what has actually happened—there is no systematic data, so people operating the system say 'we do not discriminate' and the victims say, 'but look at the position of black people in the system'. So you scratch your head and say, well there is something going on."

Dholakia is particularly concerned with the way the courts work, the next port of call for black people who enter the system. Although studies done in this area have disagreed about the way race influences processes and decisions, there is concern that all is not well. McConville and Baldwin in *The influence of Race on Sentencing in London*, 1982, found no evidence of systematic bias on racial lines in the crown courts, although this did not mean that there was no racism in other stages of the system—in arrest patterns, bail status etc. A further study done in 1983 by Cove and Crow, in the *Criminal Law Review*, confirmed these findings.

But other studies in Hackney (CRE, 1985) and Croydon (South East London Probation Service, 1985) found significant, even alarming differences of outcome between white and black offenders. Cautioning was underused for black youngsters. More whites were successful in obtaining acquittals after pleas of not guilty. Black young people are sentenced to custody nearly twice as frequently as whites. In Croydon it was found that 29 per cent of men in youth custody were Afro-Caribbeans, when they made up only 4.7 per cent of the local population, had fewer previous convictions, and came from more stable backgrounds.

Those who sit in judgment on others need to examine themselves in the light of these findings. This is difficult when the fairness of British justice on the whole is so readily assumed. Magistrates and judges are supposed to be fair, so they must be is the kind of wish fulfilment leap too frequently made, as is the one that says that some undesirable things like racism do not exist because they ought not to.

Courtroom ritual is dauntingly complex and overmystified, and this does not help. Vivien Stern of NACRO suggests some healthy introspection. "You might think that you are the most objective and fair dispenser of justice in the world, but you have to start asking if you may actually be harbouring prejudices which could be ending up in this gross discrepency in the prison population."

Most black defendants, and many whites too, feel that they have to prove their innocence rather than the court prove them guilty when they go to court. Stephen recollects his white neighbour breaking into tears when British drug smugglers were to be tried in Malaysia. "She said, 'that poor man surrounded by all those strange people who don't understand him, how frightened he will be'. Yes, I said and they have not been brought up to hate and fear whites have they?"

Establishing their credibility as defendants is understandable in some ways, but it is harder to accept that black lawyers have similar problems. Peter Herbert of the Society of Black Lawyers put it like this: "The judiciary tends to patronise black lawyers and underestimate their ability, and it is up to you to combat that inference and prove yourself. This kind of disrespect for the professionalism of black people is a deep part of white psychology". Nor is there any willingness to accept what is being said by black people. Herbert says that he has tried to mention the NACRO report on differential treatment of blacks and whites 40 times in court. Thirty times it was rejected out of hand, at Kingston crown court he was threatened with disciplinary action and once he was accused of being political. There are, to date, only two black judges, so this is an unlikely source of potential support, although the prospects for magistrates are getting better.

The Society of Black Lawyers is now launching a campaign to highlight the discrepancy in sentencing. Apparently, roughly the same degree of over-representation of black people in prisons is to be found in Australia, the United States, and South Africa.

Many people believe that higher numbers of black people should be appointed to all positions in courts to change the situation. This may prove a fruitless exercise if black people are chosen for being the "friendly coloured", or if they are neutralised by the ethos of the establishments in which they find themselves, particularly those which have been white for so long.

"We know that all British institutions operate in a racist way and it is no surprise to find the criminal justice system does also"

But David Faulkner, deputy under-secretary at the Home Office, believes these appointments *can* make a qualitative difference. "Can a white magistrate be sure that he or she has the the same sensitivity and understanding of the situation of a black person as he has of the white people among whom he probably grew up?" Things are moving in this direction in all aspects of courtroom life. The Senate of the Bar has hired a firm of consultants to examine discrimination in the profession. The Law Society has just appointed an ethnic minorities careers officer. There has been a 60 per cent increase in the number of black magistrates since 1977.

The Lord Chancellor's Department has instigated human awareness training and their glossy new booklet for potential magistrates actually features an Afro-Caribbean with community experience (playing pool). Adventurous stuff. This is, as someone commented, good news, "especially for the LCD" and John Patten is proud of this achievement. "Black magistrates are being recruited at a rate greater than their

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proportion in the population." But there are problems. Black women are still severely under-represented (black women make up over 20 per cent of the female prison population). Regional variations mean that in "white" areas, there are very few black magistrates, and this is where prejudiced judgments are more likely to be made. Very few blacks are part of the selection process— hardly any sit on the advisory committees even in high density areas. These committess are to have their names published in 1992.

But even when black candidates do apply, those who make it to the interview stage are asked questions that would never be asked of white candidates, like "How would you deal with black offenders?"—the assumption being that black magistrates are more likely to have allegiances to the community than to the court of law. In the book *Black Magistrates* Michael King and Colin May say: "There is evidence of racial prejudice among some members of the advisory committees."

The two main moves next made in the processing of offenders is prison or probation. The latter shows a depressing picture as far as the ethnic minorities are concerned, both in terms of employment profiles and service delivery.

Lennox Thomas, a black senior probation officer—a rare breed—is very critical of the service and the way it interacts with black clients. Part of the problem is the fact that this is the caring arm of the law and the self-image tends to be more complacent.

Many of the problems arise with the social enquiry reports where subjective judgments are made based on cardboard stereotypes. Writing these reports makes probation officers nervous anyway—and they tend to gear them to what the judges will think or how they will be received. Writing them for black people terrifies them. Thomas thinks that this tangibly determines the outcome. They tend to miss out on a number of options in the middle of the "recommendation spectrum", going in at one end and fixing on the more extreme options at either end. White youngsters seem to settle in the middle more often.

Pat Whitehouse, a senior probation officer who studied attitudes in social enquiry reports in Birmingham, thinks that social work theory and practice is dominated by white values and this seriously hinders black clients. One report he quotes says about a black client, "Admittedly there is about him a mild paranoid attitude which I believe to be part of a cultural more associated with his ethnic propensities." Another officer is peeved that since meeting M, a boy in dreadlocks, he has turned "truculent and obstructive" and then adds his recommendation "I would respectfully recommend that the court leave M in no doubt at all as to its displeasure at his flagrant disobedience." On the whole it has been found that they make fewer recommendations for supervised solutions, hence increasing the possiblities for custodial sentencing. They have poor community links and many feel inadequate about their knowledge of black people. This image is probably responsible for the lack of enough black applicants for probation training, a picture that is completely different for social work.

"It is poison the way they treat you—but you can't spit it out"

Black recruitment has been described as "dismal"—only two per cent. Thomas thinks the problem is serious enough for the Home Office Inspectorate to monitor the service. Some people feel that the probation service in terms of equal opportunity initiatives needs to be formally investigated by the CRE. Dholakia also thinks that there is a structural problem, with 56 autonomous probation areas operating independently, and no centralised focus.

The prison service has the best record of all on this issue. Stern believes that they are "way out in front, having done all the things that needed to be done at the top level and as a national initiative". They have clear statements, training for management and the beginnings of a comprehensive monitoring system. There is a race relations committee in every prison and culturally appropriate leisure and educational material.

But filtering these commitments down to the day-to-day level has been more difficult. Last year the case won by a prisoner Alexander against Parkhurst prison for denying him work in the kitchen was the tip of the iceberg. Daily humiliations by inmates and officers seem very much part of the game of being black in prison. Ronnie, who had three years of it, describes how "you just had to accept it all even though it hurt and you wanted sometimes to cry or yell, because raising a stink would be so much worse." Stephen added, "It is poison, the way they treat you—but you can't spit it out, because you are nothing anyway, just a fucking prisoner and a blackie at that". His spitting habit took on a completely different significance.

The Alexander case, which was significant for accepting prison was providing a service and therefore covered by the Race Relations Act, showed racially biased reports were written which bore no resemblance to the person or situation. That is the real power prison officers have over inmates, that of being able to reconstruct their past lives and future prospects. The case has prompted more complaints to arrive on the desks of the CRE.

The government, says Patten, is discussing the problem with NACRO and the CRE to see whether there is any evidence of differential treatment. Having said that, he oddly retreats into the argument that it is an immensely complicated system and that it is dangerous to leap to conclusions on the basis of simple comparisons. "For example," he continues, "the startling figures showing the proportion of ethnic minority women prisoners reflects success in tackling drug trafficking where women are often used as couriers".

Stern is worried that there is a lack of concern about what is actually happening to black people as a result of these processes, particularly as the attitude is that they are after all only offenders. "There is no argument for drawing the line between the criminal section of the population and others. Thirty per cent of men under the age of 28 have a criminal conviction—it is widespread. Most of these people put their convictions behind them. It was something they did when they were young and they grew out of it. For black people it is much much harder to do this and be reintegrated into normal life. Black men face an enormous stigma—of the conviction and all the discrimination of being black. That is why any sensible government should be directing resources into reintegration schemes for black people."

"When injustices are done under the cover of justice, it is more unfair"

They are, according to Patten. "The Home Office now funds black initiatives concerned with offender aftercare. We think it is important and are hoping to expand the funding". Increased resources to deal with all these problems are important as is a will genuinely to operate equal opportunity policies, integrated if possible throughout the system.

Another central question is: is the criminal justice system a service delivery or a speedy clearing house for the debris of society? Many of those who run the system do not see it as service delivery. And in society today, where the law and order lobby has led to a hardening of attitudes towards crime, criminals and their treatment—where the reformist welfare approaches of the sixties are being wiped out to be replaced by a commitment to punitive measures—arguments for fair treatment are likely to be seeds falling on rocks. But people like Stern and Dholakia are ploughing away with the message that the system is to do with providing a service, and a just one at that, for everyone. Stern thinks these principles are crucial. "Because it is about justice, and when injustices are done under the cover of justice, it is more unfair and the sense of alienation, bitterness, suspicion, and resentment justifiably felt is even stronger." Dholakia adds that if this is not taken seriously, "it strikes at the very heart of the democratic society in which we live".

For most of the people fighting to correct the imbalances in the criminal justice system, there are a few straightforward solutions that should be implemented without further ado. Monitoring recruitment and behaviour, with sanctions built in, seems an obvious first step. It is regular practice in the United States. There should be a series of detailed indicators, subject to inspection which should be examined. Some of this is beginning but it should go further.

There is also a need to expand the black workforce at every level of the system. Many people think training for white operators of the system is vital, again taken seriously and challenging structures, and where black voices are heard. This is often the problem as David Faulkner, deputy under-secretary in the Home Office, once stated: "There is an insatiable appetite in white people to learn about black people but they put very little trust in what they say."

Well, Patten is listening and he declares: "I can say that the criminal justice system is taking action at many different points to improve its understanding and relationship with minority ethnic communities to try to ensure that they get exactly the same kind of justice, consideration, fairness and respect as everyone else." Hopefully, Stephen is listening. The next time he does time, it should be quite different.

Race and Society is edited by Yasmin Alibhai.

Race and Society will next appear in the 5 August 1988 issue of New Statesman and Society.

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Sickle moons and the old school tie

THE SPIRIT OF PLACE: NINE NEO-ROMANTIC ARTISTS AND THEIR TIMES
Malcolm Yorke
Constable £20

Patrick Wright

"English neo-romanticism" is currently being revived as another example of the "real" culture which survived into the 1940s, but succumbed to ridicule and neglect during the abstracted postwar years from which we are only just beginning to recover. The Barbican art gallery mounted its exploratory and open-minded "Paradise Lost" exhibition last year. Peter Fuller, who is now taking over from Sir Kenneth Clark as the Second "Earl of Moore and Sutherland", has since launched *Modern Painters* in more hard-nosed loyalty to the same agreeable beleaguered cause. Now this book, financially assisted by the Arts Council and published to coincide with an exhibition at the Albemarle gallery, consolidates the trend.

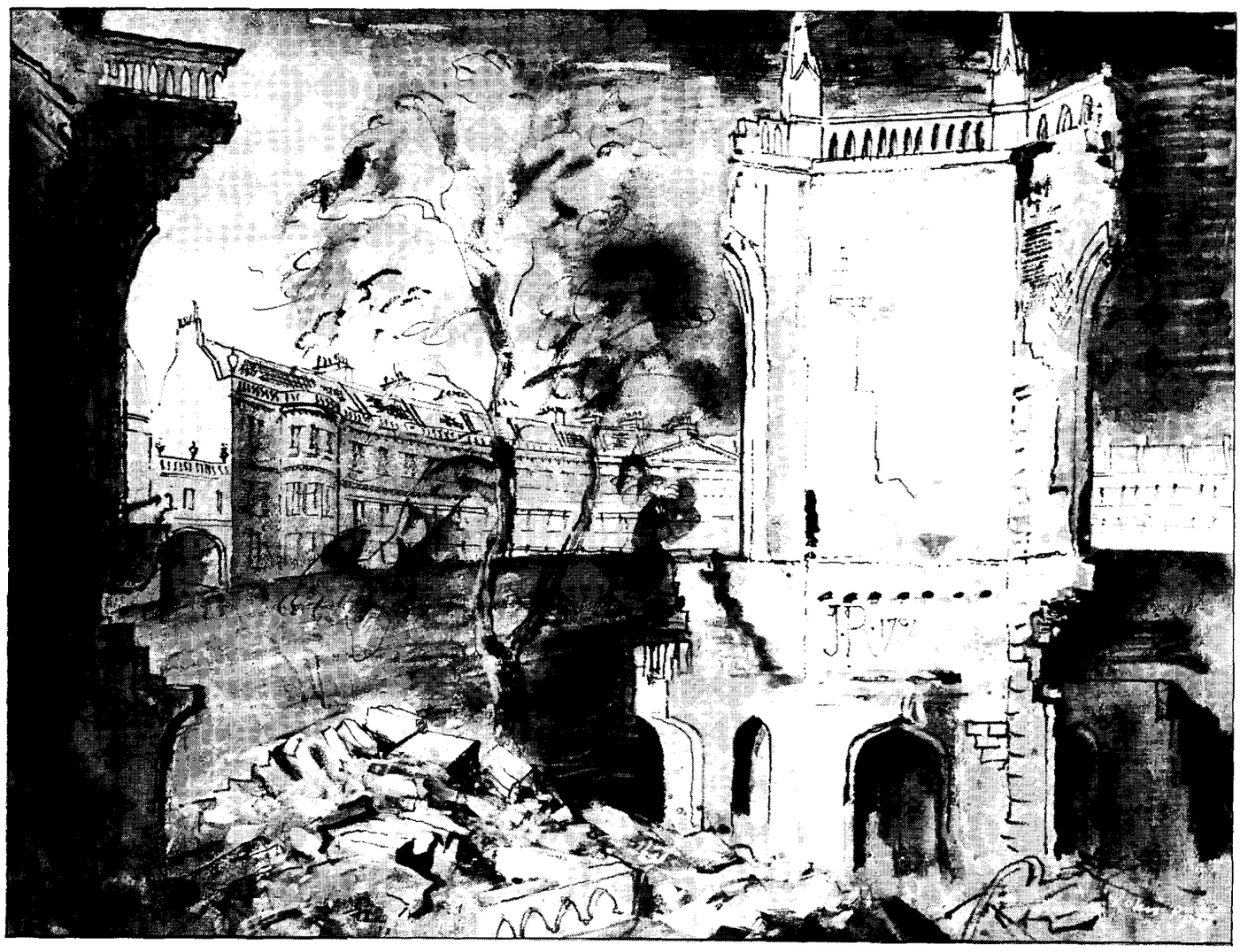
Malcolm Yorke closes his study in praise of Fuller's solitary "defence of British art", and he has already been blessed in return for his "outstanding" book. The champions of "neo-romanticism" rub up against each other like seals, but we shouldn't dwell on this harmless mannerism, picked up as it doubtless was from the deconstructionists.

Unlike its revival, "English neo-romanticism" was never a conscious movement. As Yorke remarks, "the neo-romantics didn't know who they were until the reviewers told them." In the absence of explicit statements, the story must be built up from a characteristic mood or spirit which the Albermarle gallery finds "easier to sense than to define", and which, as Yorke regrets, many critics have found easier still to deride.

Neo-romanticism is remembered as the characteristic vigil of a well-born and sensitive kind of mid-20th century Englishman. This fellow may certainly have frequented the city, but in his mind he kept escaping down a branch line which wound its way past bosky hills and folded downs before coming to a gentle halt at the perfect English village of Little Snoreing.

The neo-romantic artist favoured wooded

John Piper's "Lansdowne Crescent from the ruins of Lansdowne Chapel Bath" 1942



The British Council

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nooks, old rectories, sickle moons and knolls with clumps of trees on top. He wrote guidebooks, and not always in fear of the popularity they would unleash on his sacred geography. He transferred the Garden of Gethsemane to Wiltshire, dramatising it through the "animate foliage" of agonised trees, and pontificating about the result in an arch periodical called *Orpheus*. His landscape may have been full of haunts where ancestral echoes were only now dying on the air, but it could scarcely tolerate the presence of living people. Indeed, for one neo-romantic painter after another, the ruin seems to have stood in for more active signs of human habitation.

Malcolm Yorke writes as an advocate of neo-romanticism, but he wants nothing to do with the effete imagery of elms and village duckponds into which it frequently degenerated (and to which subsequent reputation has tended to confine it). This makes his book far more interesting than a straightforward revivalist polemic.

Starting with three "senior" figures—Paul Nash, John Piper and Graham Sutherland—he sets out to prove that neo-romanticism was not just the visionary parochialism of a fading world power. These painters reached back through Samuel Palmer and Edward Calvert in an attempt to recover the truly creative energies of Blake's "wirey bounding line". Their sense of figuration had cosmological rather than merely decorative or "literary" ambitions and, as Yorke makes abundantly clear, it was certainly no stranger to modernism, abstraction or international influence.

The peak came during the second world war. Kenneth Clark ensured that the leading neo-romantics found work through the War Artists Advisory Committee, and many stirring images of a nation under threat followed. Country houses were artistically inventorised as they suffered bombs, neglect and military vandalism under dark and brooding skies. A new imagery of ruin emerged in the blitzed cities. Meanwhile, a younger generation was picking up the threads in the pubs of Fitzrovia. These were the pre-Wolfenden days of the homosexual underground—the "Homintern" as it was dubbed by suspicious onlookers—and the neo-romantic image, taken over to the East End or down into the air raid shelter, quickly became familiar with the male form.

The postwar story seems altogether less coherent. The artists may certainly be less substantial, but Yorke's treatment of the forties and fifties is also less accomplished. He passes from one painter to the next—John Minton, Michael Ayrton, Keith Vaughan, John Craxton, Prunella Clough and Robert Colquhoun (who, as a working class Scot, certainly stands out in this southern crowd)—and his selection can seem rather arbitrary. We get a whole chapter on John Craxton, but nothing at all on Reynolds Stone, the latter surely a pivotal figure who resisted modern influences, digging back beyond Palmer and Calvert to find a more classical source in Bewick.

Yorke is obviously interested in establishing a canon of neglected fine artists, but this approach leaves disappointingly little room for broader discussion. It also prevents any full treatment of neo-romanticism's extensive connections beyond fine art: with literature, tourism, advertising, broadcasting and architectural preservation. We end up with a collection of curiously truncated lives. This was partly the fault of suicide, Richard Hamilton and the bottle, to be sure. But it also follows from Yorke's disjointed method of sticking with his chosen artist until the work no longer seems "neo-romantic", and then jumping on to the next.

Yorke has an alert eye but he likes to dress up his critical insights in a lazy rhetoric of "English heritage" and "our native tradition". The neo-romantics themselves enjoyed playing the polemical game of heritage and danger, and Malcolm Yorke reiterates the opposition between his chosen artists and a whole variety of malevolent modern forces: abstractionists like Ben Nicholson and more recent Americans, Bloomsbury theorists like Roger Fry, kitchen sink realists and, of course, John Berger who, having got properly snared in Peter Fuller's Oedipal dramas, must apparently now get used to life as every third-rate critic's marxist demon.

Unfortunately, it is these polemical oppositions, rather more than that remarkable Blakean sense of figuration, which are being revived and modernised in the strutting editorial pages of *Modern Painters*. Despite its own polemical inclinations, Malcolm Yorke's account will make it more difficult to reconcile the neo-romantics with the reactive "native tradition" of a magazine which, at its worst, seems to favour old school ties rather more than sickle moons and to enjoy a bit of paki-bashing on the side.

Meanwhile, the countryside is slightly irradiated, even if one still has to visit the art gallery to see it glowing poetically in the night, and we are said to be becoming rather post-erotic in our attitude to the body. We are also seeing a remarkable efflorescence of figurative and landscape painting. It would be a great pity if this recent endeavour—which returns to traditional forms precisely in order to open them up to new meanings and prospects—were to be smothered in polemic revived from the days when "the Hun" was flying around with a Baedeker and dropping bombs on the ancient city of Bath.

NHS 1: a second opinion

THE NATIONAL HEALTH: A RADICAL PERSPECTIVE
David Widgery
Hogarth Press £7.95
OUR NHS
David Owen
Pan £4.99

Dorothy Wade

Both these authors claim to be passionate defenders of the National Health Service on its fortieth birthday. Both are doctors called David from Limehouse. There the resemblance ends.

David Widgery is a hard-pressed GP in a Limehouse practice who patches up the problems caused by poverty on a daily basis. His job is getting tougher as the NHS becomes more stretched. Historically, Widgery blames this on Aneurin Bevan's failure to create a truly strong and inviolable health service: the recent attacks on the service have only weakened this insecure base. Widgery is swift to point out that this slow death by a thousand cuts began under the last Labour government.

David Owen was health minister in that government. Son of a doctor and a trained doctor himself, he can still produce a thick dossier of prescriptions to aid our ailing health service. Most of the suggested treatments in *Our NHS* are conservative. The NHS should become less a sickness service than one which promotes prevention of ill health. Nurses should be given better conditions and more pay, status and respect. Inefficiency should be mercilessly excised. Community care must not become an excuse for dumping the old and the mentally ill onto the streets.

Few would disagree with such remedies. But Owen's *pièce de résistance* would require more radical surgery, and cause far greater controversy. What is really needed to revitalise the NHS, he argues, is an internal market: competition between district health authorities who would buy and sell services to each other and to the private sector. By forcing doctors to compete for patients, they would be more responsive to the wishes of the consumer. Costs would be reduced, waiting lists shortened, access to treatment improved.

I remain unconvinced. Would I really choose to travel 400 miles to Glasgow for treatment, because I knew that waiting lists were shorter there than in London? But Owen's ideas are already gaining ground—Mrs Thatcher is said to be keen on the idea of an internal market, and Paddy Ashdown has just abandoned Liberal Party scruples to embrace it.

However the NHS is organised, the burning issue for supporters and defenders alike, is how it is to be paid for. Owen cautiously suggests that we should be spending 1-1.5 per cent more of our GDP on the NHS. The best way to do this would be to create a separate health fund, based on an earmarked health component of income tax. In that way, consumers would know how much they were spending on health, and NHS administrators would have long-term stability.

After this worthy but often dry account of the arcane structure and financing of the NHS, it is a relief to turn to Widgery's book. His critique of the health service is enlivened by witty and vivid accounts of, for example, a typical day in the life of an East End doctor in London. Forty patients to see, endless referrals to write, wrangles with intransigent hospital consultants and "a wrestling match to fit an IUD for a Somalian mother of five who nearly bites through her blouse in fear but who can't understand a word of my attempted reassurance."

In spite of these drawbacks, Widgery is grateful to the NHS, especially throughout childhood.

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To illustrate his vision of world without the NHS, he describes a visit to a Sicilian chapel near the slums of Palermo, ravaged by polio epidemics. "A statue of St Teresa was festooned with the limbs of plastic dolls, each one symbolising the withered part of a loved one." In desperation, the villagers relied on religious mascots.

For Widgery, the compassion with which a society treats its old and its sick, is the real measure of that society's civilisation. By these criteria, Britain's is becoming a little tarnished.

NHS 2: the reason why

THE INDEPENDENT GUIDE TO THE N.H.S. DEBATE: CASH, CRISIS AND CURE
Nicholas Timmins
The Independent, 40 City Road, London EC1, £4.25 (inc p&p)

Jeremy Laurance

There is one baffling question about the NHS crisis which started last autumn: why did it not happen six months earlier, before the general election, when it might have changed the course of political history?

The answer is that the government escaped more by luck than judgment. It is true that managers on short-term contracts and government-appointed authority chairmen had been cautious about rocking the boat publicly before the election. But it was the eruption of discontent among doctors and nurses, especially the unprecedented intervention by the heads of the three royal medical colleges, that provoked the crisis—and might easily have happened sooner.

For five years the hospital service had been squeezed, mostly to good effect in terms of increased efficiency. But the big savings had been made; there was no more fat left to cut. Pay awards had been repeatedly underfunded and demand had continued to grow. "Creative" accounting was the defence ploy most widely used. But the options here, too, were suddenly exhausted. Health authorities found themselves having to implement cuts all at once that should have been spread over years. In barely nine months, 3,000 beds were closed.

The worry now is that highlighting the NHS's crisis may turn out to make things worse, not better. It has provoked an epidemic of thinking the unthinkable. As Timmins says, by confirming that the crisis was real and calling for "alternative" as well as "additional" funding, the medical college heads opened "the window of opportunity" for a review of the NHS "aimed at least as much at its dismemberment as its preservation".

This book, culled from the columns of the *Independent*, provides a compellingly written, blow by blow account of the crisis—the background, the politics and the options. The indefatiguable Timmins—the most prolific, and widely acknowledged to be the best, health correspondent in the business—manages to treat complex arguments even-handedly and with the lightest of touches. But the overall direction of his work is unmistakeable: it offers the best and most sustained defence of what remain the NHS's principal virtues in its forty-first year: comprehensiveness, equity and excellent value for money.

Polly's choice

THE TRUTH ABOUT LORIN JONES
Alison Lurie
Michael Joseph £11.95

Sara Maitland

Alison Lurie is a truly clever writer: sharp eyed and eared for the details of life about her, astringent, witty, and with a stylish control which allows her to use wit rather than be used by it. One very seldom feels that she sacrifices either truth or plot for the cheap joke and this is rare. I would not like to meet her, though; I would feel, as I would with Jane Austen (though Austen is ultimately more tolerant, affectionate,

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towards her own creations than Lurie) that my every mannerism and movement might well end up as grist for her mill.

The comparison with Austen is not frivolous—both of them take the social comedy, the novel of manners and use it for highly ethical ends, for exposing the triviality and dishonesty in many of our accepted codes and customs; they take the known characters of their daily lives and make the reader see them aslant, differently, better. But *The Truth about Lorin Jones* is not her best book, though all these hallmarks are present in abundance.

Poor Polly Alter is a New York art historian, nearly 40 and divorced, who doesn't trust men, is trying to write a biography of Lorin Jones — a dead but risingly important painter. As a good feminist she starts wanting to write the story of a delicate genius exploited and destroyed by the men in her life. As she proceeds to meet the men (and the women) who had known Jones she is forced to recognise (surprise, surprise) that this is not the whole truth; more, she is forced to deal with her own subjective identification with Lorin and find that she does not much like it.

The trouble is that the message is a bit simplistic—Polly Alter is so naive about herself and her subject that it is nearly impossible to believe that she could ever have got the job she is supposed to have at her museum, let alone land a commission to write a biography. Perhaps New York intellectual feminists are a different breed from British ones. (Perhaps also I have a subjective identification with New York intellectual feminists and I do not want us presented in this light—this is possible.) But I do not recognise these women: the lesbian scenes are frankly appalling and unfair to the narrative. If my best friends were women like this I, too, would seize the first opportunity to run off with a beach bum who had lied to me and who was the ex-toyboy of the subject of my biographical endeavours.

Offered a crude choice of becoming "an angry, depressed lesbian feminist or a selfish successful career woman" (yes, it is posed as bluntly as that), Polly takes a surprisingly long time (five pages) to decide instead that she will consent to insecurity, sexual passion and complexity. "To your own self be true"—the moral message of this saga—is fairly trite when the alternatives are so deadly.

And yet, on the way to so weak an ending, there are infinite delights. Lurie gives us, for example, "verbatim" the research interviews that Polly conducts: the subtle determination of every character to talk not about Lorin Jones, but about themselves is beautifully done; so is the forgiveness that Polly and her estranged father find for each other—a moment of real sweetness that makes all the wittier the failures and incomprehensions of their relationship.

Class refinements, opposing viewpoints, the subtlety of self-interest masquerading as truth, and some wonderful dialogue: Lurie is on to us all and converts the knowing into fiction. What weakens the novel is that the point that all perception is subjective, incomplete and "ideologically informed" is hardly worth making any more, and that Lurie doesn't really like women as much as men. A pity.

Night-clubbing

PORN GOLD: INSIDE THE PORNOGRAPHY BUSINESS
David Hebditch and Nick Anning
Faber £14.95

Ian Jack

Let's be plain about it. This is not a good book. It has a catchpenny title, a modish cover and a reputable publisher. But it is incompetently written and structured, shamefully edited, and proceeds with the swift narrative flow of a septic tank. And these are only my more trivial objections, soft-core complaints, quite arousing in their way, compared to the central turn-off: that it is also numbingly dull.

Hebditch and Anning are practitioners of the new value-free school of investigative journalism, the one without harmful additives such as guilty men and private convictions about right and wrong. They say they have "deliberately avoided involving ourselves in the debate about the morality of pornography...we are investigative writers, not sexologists, sociologists, criminologists or psychologists." What animates them is the mechanics of the pornography trade. They find it "complex and challenging". Their aim is to "identify and portray the personalities and reveal the profits made in the worldwide business of pornography".

Ex-Marine and pornstar, Viper (sic)

In the strictly economic sense the authors hold a firmly Thatcherite view of their subject. The pornography industry today, they say, is "characterised by its disregard for national borders"; it's a noble free market with an invisible hand which belongs to the masturbator.

In other words, this is a Nestlé situation, in which the moralists of Britain ("parochial. . . a quaint backwater with repressive laws and puritan attitudes") stand as much chance as Rowntree when it comes to fighting the pornography factories of northern Europe, whose owners "have transformed their trade from a seedy and illicit cottage industry to a stable and well-refined mass-production business employing the latest know-how and yielding billions in revenues".

We are told that "fascinating characters" with "colourful stories" lie behind this transformation. None of them is remotely memorable, but then Moses and the Ten Commandments in the hands of Hebditch and Anning would have put the Israelites to sleep. Rarely can so much have been described, so badly, to so little purpose. Fascinating porn-baron Peter Schmitt, for example: "We are not great seekers of publicity, admits Peter Schmitt, sitting behind his system-furniture desk and looking out over the expansive interior of his warehouse."

Or colourful old card Beate Uhse, who turns out, colourfully, to live in Flensburg's Gutenbergstrasse, a street named after the inventor of moveable type. Why do we need to know this fact? Because: "Unlike Johannes Gutenberg, who died a pauper, Beate Uhse's business has made her rich and successful." Or the fabulous Schierstein porn warehouse! What a story it could tell if only shelves could talk: "To keep the Schierstein warehouse at optimum inventory levels, ZBF has two back-up stores in nearby Mainz-Kastel."

A great quantity of information is shifted in this manner. The average porn magazine measures 6.5 inches wide by 9.25 inches deep (165 x 250 mm). *Rapport*, a legal magazine in Denmark, has been banned in the Faroe Islands. An establishment owned by one Curth Hson-Nilson in the Canary Islands—"which have been Spanish since the 15th century"—counts as the last porn shop in Europe before the South Pole. Plots of porn films are endlessly described and the bestselling videos listed. Documents feature prominently. Hebditch and Anning will never summarise a letter if they have the original in their possession, nor will they paraphrase a conversation if they've gone to the bother of taping it.

Their work does no harm, I suppose, unless you include the damage done to the language and the occasional perversion of fact: this is a book which, in its historical prelude, thinks Siva is a goddess rather than a god and Rajput a place rather than a people. But beneath its alleged non-moral stance, its position of having no position, lies a male libertarian undertow

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which manifests itself in dull cracks about feminists and their views on rape.

At the end comes a list of questions, which the authors feel able to answer from the depths of their experience. The section has a child-like, Arthur Mee kind of charm. Can pornography be stopped by legislation? ("No.") Do pornographers exploit sex for profit? ("Of course . . . but probably no more than hairdressers.") Is pornography consumed only by dirty old men? ("Definitely not.")

And the big one: does pornography degrade women? Their full answer is only a slight expansion of its opening sentence. "Not according to women in the pornography business." So that's all right then. Call off the hounds! We need investigate no further.

Reluctant heroines

WRITING LIVES: CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN WOMEN WRITERS
Mary Chamberlain (editor)
Virago £7.95

Justine Picardie

"I can't think of any women writers who are so concerned with the details of their being a writer and having written such and such," Elizabeth Hardwick observes in a conversation with Helen McNeil. "We are not allowed to throw ourselves around in that way."

Yet the interviews in this collection of conversations between Virago authors reveal that, even when given the chance to do a little boasting, women writers remain rather diffident. "I can't really imagine that any creative artist wakes up and feels, 'How good I am!' and 'Look how far I have come!' because you know yourself to be up against your limitations," Hardwick says. And even at the age of 72, after years of critical acclaim, she continues, "I find it remains difficult to be up against the limits of your knowledge, your intelligence, your talent all the time. Just adding to the gross print of the world is a presumption."

For presumption and bumptiousness, it seems, are sinful in the extreme in these Writing Lives. Far better to work quietly, with no clamour and noise about the process. "I never thought I would write," says the Irish author Mary Lavin to the poet Eavan Boland. "I never intended to write...I just wrote...There just didn't seem to be any difference between cooking a dinner and writing a story."

This is not to say that writing comes easily: Lavin describes the endless drafts and painstaking re-writes of her short stories. (But even then with self-deprecation rather than pride. "It was really a very wasteful method of working," she says apologetically.) Rebecca West was even more blunt. When asked by Marina Warner whether any of her books were easy to write, she replied firmly, "No. It's a nauseous process."

Molly Keane—though she is rather more enthusiastic—is equally unpretrentious when talking to Polly Devlin about her first book, written when she was ill in bed as a young girl. "For an escape and through sheer boredom I began to write a book. I wrote away under the bedclothes, and honestly I must have written 50, or 60,000 words or more, and I thought it was pure Shakespeare. Well, not Shakespeare exactly—more Dornford Yates."

From then on, writing was "always terribly hard work. The grims, absolutely the grims." And she avoids any grand analysis of literature: "I don't know how books are made. I mean give me a book and I'll read it like a story, but I wouldn't ever take it to pieces and say how it is done...I don't understand anything about my writing. I really don't understand why it's successful and I don't understand why it should fail either. It's all on a level to me."

Why then talk about writing, one might ask? (Or inquire into this writer's life at all; when Keane is probed about the sudden death of her husband, which left her a widow in her thirties with two small daughters, she simply replies, "Mm. It was a bit much.")

Nevertheless, this collection, issued on the occasion of Virago's fifteenth birthday, provides a gentle reminder of many undocumented Writing Lives. Kathleen Dayus's first volume of autobiography was published when she was 79. As she says, writing was painful, but she simply got on with it, in between the rest of her life. "I do me work. Bit of washing, dusting and cleaning, cooking. Help me daughter. And I write in the evening, night time." There has been praise, a certain fame, and yet she admits—like so many other women in this book—that "being an author, I don't think it's caught up yet, to tell you the truth...I don't feel as if I'm a somebody." Writers these women are; viragos and braggarts, clearly they are not.

The CND story

AGAINST THE BOMB: THE BRITISH PEACE MOVEMENT 1958-1965
Richard Taylor
Clarendon Press £32.50

Christopher Driver

A fortnight ago, Richard Taylor's history of CND looked just the article for a reviewer's summery weekend, with a saunter down Memory Lane, humming that period song, *Where Have All the Flowers Gone?* as sung perhaps by Julie Felix on one of the mild-and-bitter demos at the Warren Row Regional Seat of Government (now in the hands of an estate agent, one of Mrs Thatcher's surplus secrets).

The question about the flowers of Aldermaston had answered itself. Collins and Russell, Duff and Goss, had been cast in the oven as the gospel puts it; though later blooms (Gott and Gittings and other old man's beard) still come up fresh as departmental editors at the *Guardian*.

But suddenly, Memory Lane has turned into an ill-tempered motorway, littered with overheated vehicles and imprudent U-turns. Yet again, the Labour Party is on its travels. The Welsh blizzard has carpeted every TV screen in sight with his soft answers. We are back to 1960 (when Labour's party conference voted itself into unilateralism) and 1961 (when it voted itself back out).

But of course, history never quite repeats itself, even in the TGWU. In that period, the leader was consistent, the party volatile. This time, it is the other way round. (I do not imply a preference. In other ways, Gaitskell's intransigence was a political weakness; Labour in the eighties has been paying a heavy price for those Militant stiff necks.)

In the circumstances, genteel glee must be breaking out at the Clarendon Press. Taylor's book is a timely corrective to anti-nuclear myth-making and generality, and the production is scholarly (though the name index excludes the footnotes). Neil Kinnock, who lists "reading" as a recreation, will surely look back here to the formative period of his political youth. Taylor, too, will provide him with chapter and verse against the *Observer*'s Robert Harris, who attributed Kinnock to the Committee of 100 (26 June). Page 196 lists all the members of the Committee of 100—no Kinnocks. Of course, Neil (or Glenys) may well have sat down with Russell and about 12,000 other people who blocked Trafalgar Square on 17 September 1961. But even Thatcher could not make much of pacific disobedience in a crowd (she should be so lucky with her hooligans at Millwall), whereas some of the 100, named or still unidentified, later committed what at best can be called high-minded crimes, including the springing of George Blake. Kinnock, perhaps, will have better luck than Meacher with the *Observer*.

Give or take a few details, amplifications and characterisations, the events in the original "CND story" needed little revision since my contemporary account, *The Disarmers* (1964). But Taylor does change the field of focus (the survivors talk; the dead can be libelled) and he brings out for the eighties a vanishing generation, class and set of social—even theological—assumptions. It was well worth preserving David Boulton's description of Peggy Duff as "a cross between Margaret Rutherford gone to seed and Violet Carson as Ena Sharples", especially as Taylor is elsewhere generous about her working class loyalty and practicality. And here is a delectable quotation, inaccessible to me 25 years ago, referring to an event mounted by the London regional committee of CND. Diana Collins to Jacquetta Hawkes:

"The thought of spending a social evening organised by our long-haired bearded friends instead of an evening with you and Jack [J.B. Priestley] fills me with such despondency and gloom that I can hardly bear to contemplate it. However John says that as he is Chairman he thinks perhaps he *ought* to put in an appearance..."

With such shepherds, whose lambs needed media wolves on the march?

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Hoary spy tales

THE FRIENDS: BRITAIN'S POSTWAR SECRET INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS
Nigel West
Weidenfeld & Nicolson £12.95

Ed Harriman

Nigel West, aka Rupert Allason, Tory MP for Torbay, is not a historian. He's a records clerk for the security services. If you warm to code names, duty rosters and accolades handed out like school prizes to the chaps of MI6 who spied on and subverted colonial "natives" and "the communists" in the 1940s and 1950s, you might enjoy West's latest book.

If you are looking for a study of the sometimes fraught, always interesting relationship between MI6 and British foreign policy, better to read what is still the only decent work in the field, Anthony Verrier's *Through the Looking Glass*. If you prefer accounts of spies which portray real, live people, then forget West's book. His MI6 agents and intelligence officers are as if drawn entirely from the records card index.

Nonetheless, West has discovered a "steady little earner" and his betters seem passably satisfied with the arrangement. Officials from MI5 and MI6 apparently feed him information. He tidies it up. He says he consults the secretary of the D-Notice Committee. And regular as clockwork, out pops almost a book a year promising insider "scoops" of fiendishly clever plots by our security guardians, M15, M16 and GCHQ. Each title brings a little pot of gold.

The trouble with *The Friends*, as with West's other books, is that much of what he "reveals" is old rope, hoary spy tales which have attained near classic, mythological status. With each new book West adds a few more names, embellishes the stories with a few more details. This is useful. And West doesn't get injuncted because, as Patrick Mayhew, the Attorney General, told the Commons, "This is not a case of an author who is or who has been a Crown servant."

The Friends mentions publicly, for the first time as far as I am aware, that John Harvey-Jones, recently retired chairman of ICI, worked in naval intelligence in the late 1940s running MI6 agents into the Soviet Baltic republics. It also lets out that Sir Robin Brook, a director of the Bank of England, was involved in MI6 clandestine activities.

West names scores of now retired MI6 officers. He says nothing, however, about what they did afterwards—how, for example, John Harvey-Jones's intelligence contacts may have helped his career, or whether Sir Robin Brook has been one of MI6's bankers. West names some of the "old boys"; he doesn't describe their network.

Ever a patriot, West does another good turn for the government—he keeps readers looking resolutely backwards. *The Friends* rehashes all the old stories about Philby; the "Emergencies" in Palestine Cyprus, and Malaya; yet again how "Buster" Crabb, the frogman, disappeared while snooping under Khrushchev's cruiser in Portsmouth harbour in 1956; and adds a few snippits about the Suez debacle.

Then, from about 1960 onward—silence. West would have one believe MI6's covert operations virtually stopped while the chaps tried to figure out which of their colleagues were gay commie traitors. *The Friends* says nothing about what MI6 was doing in Rhodesia, or Biafra, or Vietnam, or more recently in Central America, Southern Africa, Beirut or on the Thai-Kampuchea border. That's where the last 20 years' stories have been. It is also where MI6 has been active.

Ultimately *The Friends* is a thin, bloodless book. Not a story in it compares with Anthony Cavendish's description of Maurice Oldfield, in his cups, pouring out his heart in his small London flat, having been dismissed as Northern Ireland security chief for having lied about homosexuality during his positive vetting. But that happened recently, in 1979. And Cavendish's memoir, *Inside Intelligence*, is banned. Such is state influence in British publishing.

Imran Khan: one of cricket's greatest all-rounders

Rulers of the game

THE PLAYERS: A SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE PROFESSIONAL CRICKETER
Ric Sissons
Kingswood Press £14.95
ALL ROUND VIEW
Imran Khan
Chatto & Windus £12.95

Albert Hunt

Both these books offer devotees of cricket refreshingly new viewpoints. Ric Sissons puts some legendary figures from the past into their social context. Imran Khan invites us to look at the modern game through the eyes of a great player who is highly intelligent and articulate, and who has divided his life between London and Lahore. Both books are enthralling.

Sissons tells the story of how the professionals lost control of their own game. In 1846 they formed their own All-England eleven in Nottingham. Sissons notes that Nottingham was a centre of chartism. Chartism, he argues, tended to inspire self-confidence and innovative thinking among skilled workers. "For a group of professional cricketers to take the initiative and launch their own touring eleven, similar self-confidence and innovative thinking was required."

The initiative was decisively crushed, also in Nottingham, in 1881. Two Notts professionals, Shaw and Shrewsbury, were invited by Bradford to take a Notts team to the town to play a Yorkshire eleven. They accepted, but the Notts committee intervened. Seven professionals went on strike, but five of them had gone back before the end of the season. Shaw and Shrewsbury themselves apologised at the beginning of the 1882 season. The county committees and the MCC were firmly entrenched.

Sissons describes the struggles of the professionals to wrest from the counties a fair wage in summer, any wage at all in winter, and the right to spend the proceeds from their own benefits, when these were graciously awarded. By the turn of the century, a few players, like Surrey's legendary fast bowler, Tom Richardson (mythologised by Neville Cardus), had become aristocrats of paid labour. In a good year, Richardson could clear £450, while the average yearly wage of a skilled artisan was £95 and that of a farm labourer £40. But Richardson's wages were derisory compared with the rewards given to unpaid amateurs. For the 1873-74 tour of Australia, W. G. Grace paid his professionals £150 plus second class travel. He himself received £1,500.

The rule of the cricket establishment was to go virtually unchallenged until 1977, when it was disrupted by an Australian businessman, Kerry Packer. Imran Khan was one of the players who signed up for Packer's World Series cricket. He was surprised at the hostility shown to the Packer players by the county professionals in England and resigned on the spot from the Cricketers' Association. He is scathing about the association's support for the players who had chosen to make money in South Africa.

He is scathing, too, about the organisation of cricket in Pakistan. He quotes General Butt, recent president of the Pakistan cricket board, asking Abdul Qadir why he bowls from a short run when the West Indian bowlers take long runs. But he has little time either for the kind of attitudes struck by English cricket during last winter's umpiring rows. He puts an unanswerable case for neutral umpires and adds, "I'm sorry to say that English opinion on this matter reeks of colonial arrogance. English umpires, we are told, are the most experienced, competent and fair in the world..."

Imran's book ends with a welcome account of the recent West Indies v Pakistan series, in which he came out of retirement to captain Pakistan again. This series, between the two best teams in the world, was, by all accounts, enthralling. It was virtually ignored by British TV.

British TV, we are told, is the best in the world.

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Channel 4's "Tandoori Nights": who exactly was it for?

Television

Mind your language

Minority broadcasting is riddled with contradictory ideas and conflicting demands. David Docherty reports on audience research that is calling into question the idea that there can be a unified policy on ethnic programming

One of the fundamental principles of British broadcasting has always been that it should cater for specialist and minority interests. Unfortunately, although radio and television were reasonably good at providing programmes for gardeners, opera buffs and politicians, they were, by and large, awful at making programmes for disadvantaged ethnic, sexual and political minorities. This betrayed a lack of understanding of how a multicultural society operated and, consequently, an inability to formulate a coherent policy reflecting such a society.

Television, for instance, responded to the unravelling of class, family and locality in the 1970s by making well-intentioned but culturally bizarre "multi-ethnic" comedies. The primary assumption of programmes like *Love Thy Neighbour* and *Mind Your Language* was that blacks and foreigners were lovable; TV's message to the nation was that "they're just like us really". By the end of the seventies, politicians and broadcasters from all sides of the political spectrum realised that this message was patronising and redundant. The new pluralism argued that alternative ways of supplying the legitimate demands of minorities had to be discovered.

In the 1980s, two such experiments appeared: Channel 4, which began broadcasting in 1982, and the community radio experiment, which was aborted at Norman Tebbit's behest in early 1986. Channel 4 and community radio exemplified the belief that the existing national or regional broadcasters were dominated by white, middle-class men and therefore insufficiently sensitive to the needs of minorities; consequently, the new pluralists argued that those with specialist or minority tastes and interests should *themselves* be the broadcasters. The favoured analogy was that of publishing—minorities would broadcast their views without external editorial interference to whoever wished to view or listen.

Fulfilling this laudable aim has proved to be a more Herculean task than anyone could have imagined at the time. Channel 4 has found it difficult to produce a successful women's programme, young people still consider themselves underserved and, of course, the multicultural strand took a U-turn after a couple of years. Farrukh Dhondy, commissioning editor for multicultural programmes, recognises the demand for black and Asian entertainment: "I know what the Asian population wants. It wants more movie stars and auction shows."

However, he is unwilling to put all of his resources into this type of programme. Indeed, his heart is in programmes like the *Bandung File* which, he argues, "is the type of programme that the people who watch *Newsnight* might watch." By dropping *Asian Eye* and *Black on Black*, and replacing them with *Bandung*, Dhondy stirred up a hornet's nest among the ethnic communities. He is, however, unrepentant. The reason *Bandung* does not go down well with his constituency, he argues, is that the programme "lacks a black nationalistic identity and that identity is strong in Britain. But, I think that [this identity] is a lost cause and it is going to die." Dhondy argues that, "Once you get used to the idea that blacks are a permanent part of the British population you will have to get used to the fact that we are going to be doing mainstream programming."

Despite Dhondy's clearly stated and legitimate aim to produce black and Asian programmes that appeal to everyone, he has not yet convinced the ethnic minorities that his strategy is correct. However, Dhondy is faced with a dilemma: does he put his energy into shoring up minority cultures, with programmes in the Asian languages or about the West Indies, or must he aim to facilitate the development of genuinely multicultural programmes?

The problem is that there is little agreement about the purpose of minority programmes. Some types of programmes are relatively unproblematic; magazine programmes for the elderly or disabled, for instance, such as *Years Ahead*, *Same Difference* or *Listening Eye*, work because they have an informative content aimed at uncontentious minorities. On the other hand, programmes aimed at or made by potentially controversial social, cultural, taste or sexual minorities which feel oppressed or excluded from mainstream British culture, often fall into the trap of being either confessional or evangelical. At its worst the minority either speaks to itself in whispers and jargon, so that no one else can either hear or understand, or in a proselytising rant demanding attention.

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The root cause of the problem is the mixture of a belief that television is an extremely powerful tool in shaping perception (which it isn't), and that broadcasting should reflect the complicated nature of the interacting cultures which make up Britain's multi-ethnic and multicultural society (which it should). These are two separate issues, and linking them in the debate about minority broadcasting has caused considerable confusion: one can believe that television or radio programmes made by and about minorities will not change the racism, sexism or sexualism of society and, at the same time, argue that such programmes are a right conferred by virtue of minorities' separate and distinctive cultures. This is the prevalent view among the general public, of whom seven out of ten approve of Channel 4's orientation to minorities. The majority, however, does not want to watch or listen to such programmes.

The supposed beneficiaries of this "tolerance" of minority programmes are uncertain about its benefits; most members of minority cultures are more concerned about how they are portrayed in *EastEnders*, *Coronation Street* and *Brookside* than with programmes produced for them by members of thier own community. Three typical responses to minority broadcasting emerged from research conducted by the Broadcasting Research Unit* (BRU). The quietists believed that broadcasting which emphasised cultural differences was unhelpful in that it inflamed the majority, and that they should keep their heads down; others were more evangelical, arguing that broadcasting should present only the positive face of the minorities.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the differences within and between the minorities is that there is no consensus as to who should have access to broadcasting and the amount of broadcasting to which they should have access. Asians, for example, were more determined than whites that homosexuals should not have airtime.

For this reason, the idea of a unified policy on minority broadcasting seems almost perversely naive. Not only are there important differences between those of Caribbean and African extraction and those from Asia, but within such ethnic groupings there is intense conflict. The division between Pakistanis and Indians is relatively simple compared to the conflicts between Sikhs and Hindus, or within the Islamic countries, between Pakistanis and Bangladeshis.

The BRU research revealed profound differences between the various minorities. Asians were much more strongly in favour of small neighbourhood radio stations than Afro-Caribbeans. The key to understanding this was the extent to which these ethnic groups had an inclusive or exclusive view of their relationship to the national culture. Inclusivist minorities felt that all programmes on community radio should appeal to each person in a particular area: this implied that there should be no non-English broadcasts and that programmes should, as far as possible, minimise the differences between minorities. Those who held to an exclusivist view argued that each sectional interest should have its own radio station broadcasting exclusively in its own language or aimed explicitly at its own people. Asians wanted the best of both worlds; they thought that neighbourhood stations would expose the relative normality of their views and behaviour and ethnic stations would enhance their cultural peculiarity. Afro-Caribbeans were much less exclusivist—working-class as well as young Afro-Caribbeans favoured the idea that everyone should have access to programmes (whoever they are aimed at).

One clue to why these groups should be different is the measure of variations in language, belief and culture between the ethnic groups and the wider society. Asians have clear linguistic and religious differences from the rest of the UK and their desire to be included in the society is, according to the BRU research, tempered by an equally strong and intense regard for their original customs and culture. There are no such clear-cut differences between the majority of Afro-Caribbeans and the host culture: the religion of the majority of Afro-Caribbeans is mainstream Christianity and the language a variant on standard English. Therefore, although Afro-Caribbeans wanted more of their churches to be represented on radio, they were not calling for something different from conventional religious broadcasting; similarly, when they wanted more programmes aimed at them, they were asking for programmes which would not alienate white listeners—more black music programmes would be a boon to many whites.

A similar conclusion can be drawn about homosexuals. Homosexual men, because they defined themselves primarily in sexual terms, were not particularly interested in a radio station aimed at and run by homosexuals (or for that matter in Channel 4 programmes explicitly aimed at them).

They clearly felt that the political and social differences between them were as important as the sexuality which united them. On the other hand, women, for whom lesbianism was a political and, to a certain extent, cultural choice, argued that their differences from mainstream culture were sufficiently intense to warrant their own station.

**Keeping Faith?: Channel 4 and its Audience. (BRU/John Libbey £15).*

Festival

Back to the future

Yasmin Alibhai on how the Asian arts movement in Britain got its own festival

Culture, like tea in a flask, does not travel well. It goes off, it goes cold, and loses its essence. But usually thirst ensures that you drink it anyway.

For a long time in Britain, this is exactly what seemed to happen to the South-East Asian arts. First generation immigrants, pretending that India or Pakistan were somehow just beyond the commuter belt, carried on maintaining connections with the popular art and music of the subcontinent. The reasons were fairly obvious: unease, nostalgia, fears about lost certainties—and escapism.

The classical Asian arts, on the other hand, were inaccessible here because they were so deeply rooted in a different cultural environment. Second and third generation Asians, meanwhile, were busy trying to get themselves assimilated, believing that this was possible. It wasn't. Disillusionment began to produce newly aware Asian youngsters who yearned for organic connections with their past heritage. And this led to a blossoming of British-based Asian arts theatre groups such as Tara Arts, which took its inspiration from old Indian texts, and professional dancers like Shobhana Jeyasingh and Alpana Sengupta. The irony is that it was the young Asians who were turning towards the classical traditions while the older generation watched Hindi films (usually tired copies of bad American movies).

Alpana Sengupta: performing classical Indian dance at the Nayee Kiran festival

The Asian arts movement in Britain has now matured. There is an impressive performance range of music, dance and theatre which includes integrations and fusions as well as the pure classical forms, comparable to anything to be found on the subcontinent itself. It represents an assertion of identity and rights in a country often felt to be indifferent or hostile.

Now a massive festival of South-Asian dance and music in Britain, **Nayee Kiran**, is to be held in Crawley (at the Hawth, 11-17 July) to celebrate this new-found assertion. Featuring great musicians like Anup Kumar Biswas, the cellist and Ravi Shankar, this is the first time that these arts of Britain have been given the space they have always deserved. The pity would be if white Britons continue to marginalise them.

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Cinema

Good taste, bad times

One's fun, the other isn't. Suzanne Moore on two new movies about the meaning of life

I don't know exactly why certain films get selected for royal premieres and others ignored, but you can be sure that John Waters' latest movie **Hairspray** would never have made the grade. The sight of various teen queens blasting on the lacquer in order to get their hair "ten feet high" would have had Prince Charles squirming with worry about the ozone layer. But then, unlike John Waters, Prince Charles has never had his priorities quite right.

Hairspray is Waters' most mainstream effort to date, and will lift him beyond the cult status he has earned for *Female Trouble* and *Pink Flamingoes*. It is both a satire and a celebration of teen culture in Baltimore of the early sixties. Life revolves around "The Corny Collins Show", a TV programme on which the town's hippest young people strut their stuff to the latest sounds and demonstrate all the new dance crazes from the Madison to the Bug. To be on the show is Tracy Turnblad's ultimate fantasy, for although she is ultra-cool, constantly in trouble at school for "hairdo violations", she is also fat and has to buy her clothes in the Hefty Hideaway Store. Nonetheless her dream comes true and she ends up being the star of the show—much to the annoyance of bitchy Amber von Tussle. Tracy, however, is more than just young, gifted and fat—she also has a social conscience and demands that the all-white Collins show become racially integrated.

In true Waters style absolutely everything in *Hairspray* is larger than life; from Divine (who plays Tracy's mother Edna Turnblad) to Velma von Tussle's exploding hairdo. The film is shot in the garish colours of a fifties teen flick and the tackiness of the clothes and hairstyles combined with Baltimore's one-dimensional architecture produces a deliriously unreal quality. And it's not just surface appearances that are camped up and exaggerated: emotions are given the same treatment. Thus Tracy's and her friends' commitment to racial integration is shown—in Waters' own words—to be "ludicrously liberal". When Tracy snogs with her hunky boyfriend Link they whisper things to each other like "Our souls are black—even though our skins are white."

Though Waters' vision of the world is always slightly skewed (the amusement park in *Hairspray* is appropriately called Tilted Acres) he is best known for his shocking bad taste. This film, however—despite the odd bout of zit-bursting—is so wholesome that it hurts. For like most satirists Waters is profoundly interested in morality, and like Pee-Wee Herman he mixes together equal quantities of perversity and innocence. He creates a parallel world of trash aesthetics where things *are* exactly what they seem and more so; where style *is* content. Everyday life and its values are rendered either banal or bizarre until the concept of normality appears totally bankrupt. If life is so strange, why worry about being a bit odd yourself?

Teen flick meets trash aesthetics: John Waters' "Hairspray"

There would be no point in asking Woody Allen this question since he has made his entire living out of worrying about such things. His new film, **September**, should really be subtitled "Reasons to be Miserable, Part 16", gathering together as it does Allen's usual cast with his usual obsessions.

It's all very arty and the sort of affair that is usually described as "well-crafted". It is also extremely irritating. As a group of well-to-do people spend the last days of summer in a country house in Vermont we are shown their inevitably tangled relationships and hopeless emotional lives. It's as if a number of neurotics are competing for the title of "The most depressed person alive." Mia Farrow—who gets progressively more dithery with each Allen film she's in—certainly has a good chance of winning. She plays Lane, the daughter of an ageing, overbearing playgirl who blames her mother for ruining her life. Lane is in love with a self-deluding would-be writer who, naturally enough, has "problems". He is in love with her best friend, another confused and miserable character. Meanwhile Denholm Elliot (doing another of his sad and seedy English melancholic performances) is of course in love with Lane, etc etc.

The characters go about their gloomy business in a beautifully tasteful house listening to beautifully tasteful music and discussing Japanese movies. The sepia tones of the lighting match the brown and beige decor of the house. There are no clashing colours, never any washing up in the sink, not a single vulgar object. No wonder they're all so bloody depressed—such relentless good taste must be pretty hard to live with.

This film could well have been a radio play, for it is carried totally on its dialogue. Unsurprisingly, everything is desperately meaningful, although some of the lines are completely inept. And as usual it is Allen's female characters who are the most complex and interesting. Yet their fragility and vulnerability becomes so irritating that you find yourself wondering how these people ever get down to the shops.

The point of this sub-Chekov, sub-Bergman (and also sub-Allen) exercise is, I suppose, that every man (and woman) is an island. The meaning of life is that life is meaningless. One of the characters, a physicist, says while playing snooker that "The universe is haphazard, morally neutral and unimaginably violent." Which seems to sum up Woody Allen's feelings about life in general.

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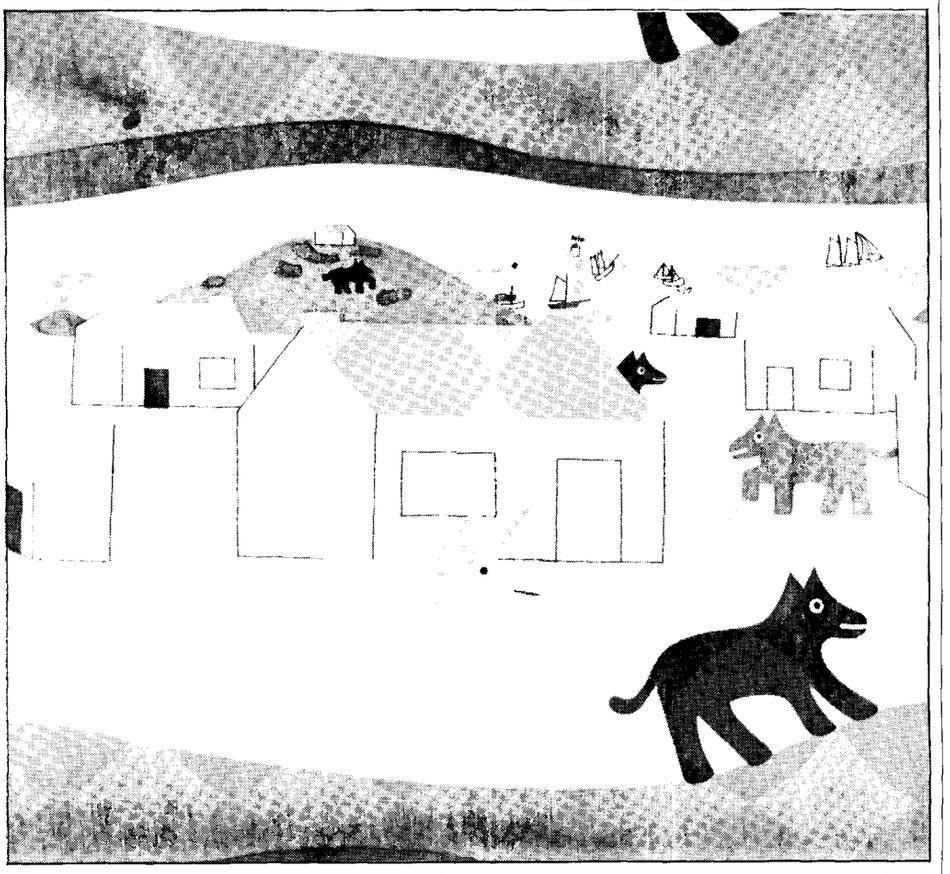
Art

Interiors

Lucy Ellmann on the Nicholson family's contrasting attitudes to domestic design



Uncharacteristic cheerfulness: Ben Nicholson's "George and Rufus" was transferred onto nursery fabric

York is in the grips of an arts festival. Among other things, this means people queuing up every day to be admitted to the mysteries of Mystery plays only to be struck by lightning or at the very least torrential rain as soon as they reach their seats. But, not far from this medieval endurance test, the 20th century parades its more intimate preoccupations in the comparative tranquillity of the York City Art Gallery, with a cosy, kindly, but also clever collection of domestic decorations and other frivolities produced by four members of the Nicholson family.

What the interior design ideas of Ben, Nancy, Kit and EQ Nicholson (who is the only one of four still living) seem to have in common is not only a commendable taste for window-seats, and a not so endearing stylistic primness, but a serious commitment to the notion that art may have some relevance to our daily lives. For the two female Nicholsons in fact, life must have intruded equally upon art—Kit died in a plane crash, leaving his wife EQ with three children to bring up, while Nancy was left by Robert Graves with four. Nancy seems to have countered the chaos of her own domestic scene by an almost obsessional fastidiousness in her interior decoration work. Setting up the Poulk Press a few years after her marriage broke up, she published the following advert for her fabrics: "One great advantage of hand-printed stuffs is that they can be produced exactly for their intended purpose: a divan cover for that particular divan, a pair of curtains for that particular window, a cushion-cover for that already settled scheme."

Her own family was living at the time on a house-boat underneath Hammersmith Bridge: attention to aesthetic details, it seems, was one of Nancy's few extravagances for many years. She suffered from a liking for drab greens but otherwise produced lively, down-to-earth cushion covers of ducks accompanied by their own eggs, or of multi-coloured dog paw-prints, as well as elegant, inventive illustrations overflowing with minutiae.

Compared with Nancy's excursions into a kind of no-nonsense hedonism, Ben and Kit were more austere. Kit's architecture had some graceful curves but his interiors have a cool, white self-restraint about them which would send any early-riser straight back to bed with a headache. Perhaps in consequence, his most notable achievements were neither domestic nor particularly private: the London Gliding Club building and Augustus John's studio (though John did sometimes refuse visitors).

There is an air of discomfort, despite the dashing innovativeness, in his use of Aaalto and Breuer's functionalist furniture.

Ben Nicholson's pursuit of "brittle unity" and "weak airy ghosts" (Patrick Heron's view of his work) in his paintings is matched by his use of white circles in a relief box he painted and a fabric design that can be seen here. For, although he spent more time painting, Nicholson had serious plans for design. After pleading in an article of 1941 that the liberation of form and colour should be included among Britain's wartime objectives, he wrote that "far from 'abstract' art being the withdrawal of the artist from reality...it has brought art once again into common everyday life [through its application in the design of] contemporary architecture, aeroplanes, cars, refrigerators, typography, publicity, electric torches, lipstick holders, etc."

One cannot help wondering whether the slightly severe Nicholson offspring were influenced, or repelled, by their artistic parents' taste. Their father, the illustrator William Nicholson, liked to wear delicately spotted shirts and pale yellow gloves, but his often witty pictures seem paradoxically dingy now. He later took a dim view of the unbearable lightness of Ben's being. A striking portrait of Nancy and Kit painted by their mother, Mabel Pryde Nicholson, shows two disgruntled children surrounded by a melancholy Victorian interior, and hints at what they all had to rebel against: the heavy red velvet curtains have simply *got* to go.

But Ben's use of flat areas of solid colour does recall his father's poster-painting style, and unlike Kit, asceticism sometimes deserted him. The horses, George and Rufus, along with Johnny the stag and Billy the crocodile are given ample room to manoeuvre in a cheerful landscape painting which Ben had transferred onto fabric. He shares with Nancy, in her bunch of stencilled flowers that seem to sprout from a bedspread, and particularly with the paintings of EQ, an ability to send a flat surface into a frenzy of spatial play. EQ's paintings, sadly seldom shown, are compelling scenes of undulating, barely solidified substance.

But seriousness aside, this exhibition would be nothing without its general aura of dottiness. Its four mock interiors, focusing on the personal styles of decoration of these artists, seem in their anthropological way to pinpoint their peculiarities. One can see the gramophone Kit designed (when he was drawing up plans for absurd TV sets) in EQ's section—apparently she can do without it for the duration of the show. There one can also find the curtain fabric that was accepted for use on the Royal Yacht *Britannia* (not her best). In Nancy's corner one can see the actual dolls she made as a child (from some French socks she disliked), which inspired her father's book for children, *The Pirate Twins*. And in what Ben would have called the dogalogue (a mere £3.50), one discovers that Nancy espoused both health foods and contraceptives, among other minor revelations offered by the Nicholsons' friends and family.

When presenting Ben with the Order of Merit in 1968, the Queen spoke disparagingly to him of an artistic cousin of hers who "only paints for pleasure". "Whatever other reason could anyone have?" was Nicholson's courteous reply, and it's certainly a reason to go to York this month.

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Music

Limited editions

It used to be called nostalgia. Now it's big business. Stuart Cosgrove on how pop is cashing in on its past

Pop music shows every sign of having subsumed the values of the antique dealer and the cultural connoisseur. Over the last ten years rock memorabilia, record-collecting and the general trade in pop's history has become an industry of surprisingly large proportions. Sothebys and Christies, dealers normally inclined towards impressionist masterpieces and Chippendale furniture, have found space for John Lennon's old underpants. Pop is auctionable.

Over the next few weeks, the collector's industry goes into summer overdrive. Record fairs are scheduled for every major city, culminating in a mass jamboree on Sunday 24 July at the Cambridge Rooms in London's Woburn Place, when 160 stallholders will hawk pop history to the faithful. The organisers are expecting a huge turnout of Japanese collectors with loadsayen to spend. Travellers cheques are cashable on the day and everything from rare Elvis records to imported American tour posters will be up for grabs.

What do intense collectors look like and how do they operate? Among the throng of pop partisans, shambling collectors and English eccentrics are two very peculiar types: the doubles and the story-tellers. The doubles buy two copies of a record, one to play and the other to look at. The story-tellers go to record fairs but have no real interest in the records on sale—they prefer the ones that got away. At their best they are pop apocryphiliacs who spread fantastic stories of rare and elusive music.

According to the apocryphal tale, there was once a devastating fire at a pressing plant in America. The fire melted the entire pressing-run of a release by Prince, the Beatles, the Stones, Bob Dylan—the list is inexhaustible. Fortunately, one of the plant's employees had stolen a copy before the fire but on his way home he'd misplaced the record in a roadside bar. When the fire damage was assessed it became obvious that only one record survived and it was lost, so the search began, and continues daily in the minds of the vinyl maniacs.

Record collecting has taken on the aura of the antique and the distinction of the art-world. Words like "rare", "original" and "classic" are used unsparingly as if an Otis Redding record on the blue Stax label existed in a parallel universe to the paintings of Magritte.

Although compact-discs have cornered the futures market and are a byword for high-tech efficiency, it is the "Box-set" which carries the resonances of the past and instantly appeals to the collector.

Queen's *The Complete Works* , a box of 14 LPs that retails at a discriminating £72.99, tries to align itself with the quasi-historical trash that the *Observer* occasionally attempts to shift in its Sunday supplement. Framed maps and nautical cartography is the mood that's set by "The Souvenir Map of Queen's World Domination", a free gift that follows the band's progress around the world, conveniently forgetting to set down anchor in the racist harbour of Sun City.

Jerry Lee Lewis's *The Sun Years* (£52.99) is a period piece. It focuses on Memphis in the 1950s, seeing it in terms of a great artistic moment, and virtually concluding that Jerry's "Great Balls of Fire" is a goodness gracious variation on Picasso's blue period.

The box-set lends dignity to the undignified. *The Solar Box-Set* (£37.99) elevates the history of patchy disco groups like Shalamar and Lakeside to the status of inscribed art; and *Slaughtered* a moody box-set in funereal black, which retails for £15.99, celebrates the first three years of the Slaughterhouse Recording Studios.

But one urgently released box-set looks set to puncture the wheel of pop's antiques roadshow. Michael Jackson's current box-set—seven early Motown albums for the bargain price of £9.99—comes in a yellow plastic carrier bag, touched by the values of Tesco's rather than the Tate. Inside there's a free poster and a white acrylic glove. Not even Arthur Negus's serene voice could invest it with a sense of value.

"Charlotte Valandrey...has a vitality and charm that puts her in the Emily Lloyd class" Independent
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Miranda Richardson having trouble with daddy in "The Changeling"

Theatre

Family fortunes

Betty Caplan looks at two variations on the oedipal theme

Watching **The Changeling** (National Theatre) is like gazing at a shoal of grinning piranhas, trying to guess which will eat the other first. In this fish-tank of a world, the only hope of advancement is to sleep with the right person—a lesson DeFlores, Master of Moral Ceremonies, has learned only too well. Hired by his master's daughter Beatrice-Joanna (Miranda Richardson) to kill the suitor her father has lined up for her, he imposes his own price, heaping scorn on her repeated offers of mere money.

Richard Eyre has set his production of Middleton and Rowley's play in a 19th-century Spanish slave colony and, with true inspiration, has cast the fine black actor George Harris in the role of DeFlores, thereby condensing the implications of race, sex and class into one character. In an odd reversal, Harris appears as a kind of Iago rather than Othello, with the henchman's moral consistency and instinctive grasp of the centrality of the sexual motive.

But rage is undeniably *The Changeling*'s dominant emotion, much of it displaced—the playwrights of the period having been forced to project their anger onto the luxurious Catholic countries of southern Europe in order to avert the Protestant censor's barb. And in an interesting variation on the Oedipus theme, Miranda Richardson's guileful Beatrice similarly vents all her feelings on her father's servant rather than on the old man himself.

The handsome baroque set designed by William Dudley has the claustrophobic sense of a prison, pressing in on all sides. The madmen's cells are positioned either side of the stage round spiral staircases—fire escapes which lead right into the flames, as it turns out. The overriding irony at the centre of the play is, however, lacking and the fierce wit which articulates this most decadent of subjects frequently falls flat.

In **Greek** (Wyndham's Theatre), Steven Berkoff also takes his three companions on a wild, anarchic journey through Freud's favourite bedtime story. Our "septic isle" is the target for Berkoff's spluttering rage—in particular, the passivity of a working class that has allowed the Thatcherite plague to happen. Combining political satire with a treatise on sexual repression, Berkoff's play comes to a splenetic climax in Eddy's (Eddy-pus) encounter with the Sphinx. But the terms of her argument are almost as debased as its object—woman's superiority is to be measured by her greater potential for orgasm, ten to every one of his. Her reward for this wisdom is to have her head chopped off upon which Eddy heads straight back to his ma. The play's message is a curious one: Cleveland needn't have worried—incest apparently is OK.

Berkoff's prodigious talent as actor, director, mime artist and writer seem to me totally misdirected in this piece. Having taken more than a few liberties with the original, he might have been more courageous still and taken another one by allowing the Sphinx her head. As it is, the conclusion simply reinforces Eddy's irksome habit of making those around him into objects. Berkoff's own performance as an addled latterday Alf Garnett is savagely funny, his face twisted and contorted like an old lemon. Rarely are you likely to see paternal inertia portrayed with such vitriolic vitality.

MEDIATIONS

On Monday, Channel 4's indispensible slot for independently made films, *The Eleventh Hour*, showed again Richard Philpott's fine film about the "new age travellers" who commemorate the various pantheistic feasts of ancient Britain—the summer solstice at Stonehenge is the best known—and who are punished for their non-conformism by a campaign of police harassment. That the film is frankly partisan, in reflecting the travellers' experience in their own words, is nowhere at issue. *The Eleventh Hour* was never designed as a slot for impartial reportage.

But this repeat didn't go smoothly. Given the widely (and partially) reported events at Stonehenge this year, Philpott was asked to submit a prologue to update his earlier findings. He proposed to put a number of questions to a representative of the Wiltshire police and to spokespeople for the National Trust and English Heritage, the latter two being the custodians of Stonehenge on the nation's behalf.

Philpott sought a police explanation of the so-called Battle of the Beanfield of 1985 when 1,363 police in full riot gear made 537 arrests. It was the largest civilian arrest in British history. Just ten people were convicted. The Earl of Cardigan, self-evidently a non-partisan source, gave testimony in court that police broke vehicle windows and dragged occupants through broken glass, a technique allegedly employed this year.

In preparing his questions, Philpott approached HTV, whose cameras recorded events outside the beanfield, and ITN, whose crew managed to slip through the police cordon and cover the police charge. Both companies said their material was unavailable. HTV maintains it is making its own documentary. ITN says it allows no-one to see unbroadcast footage without a court order.

The questions for English Heritage and the National Trust concerned their joint custodianship of Stonehenge. But Philpott never got to put his questions. C4's director of pgrammes Liz Forgan refused to give her consent. Philpott draws the inference that the channel has become so timorous that an avowedly partisan programme may not put questions about public policy, even though C4's remit nowhere stipulates that "balance" must obtain within individual programmes. He also feels that commissioning editors are increasingly simply promoting their own ideas and putting thhem out to tender. If he's right, the prospect is drab; *The Eleventh Hour* has been the most valuable and individual slot in the whole of television.

W. Stephen Gilbert

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VOLUNTEER NOTICE BOARD is a free service provided by New Statesman & Society with financial assistance from Thames Television's Help programme. Interested organisations are invited to send their copy (approximately 45 words) to Brian Cushion at New Statesman & Society, Foundation House, Perseverance Works, 38 Kingsland Road, London, E2 8DQ. Please note that this service is for recruiting volunteers only. If you have salaried vacancies contact the Classified Department on 01-739-1645.

WANTED! CSV urgently need 8 volunteers to work with disabled and also dependent people in Hereford and Worcestershire. Families, children and individuals all need help on a one-to-one basis for 4-6 months. Hard and rewarding work, free accommodation away from your project, weekly allowance of £35 plus travelling expenses paid. Could YOU do it? Contact CSV at The Old Quilt Factory, Worcester, WR1 3QN, or ring 0905 726624.

HOMES for Homeless People. Groups running projects for single homeless people throughout the United Kingdom urgently require volunteer workers to help in the running, and day-to-day life of their houses. No experience or qualifications are needed. Workers receive board and lodging plus pocket money. 6 months minimum. The work is demanding but never dull. Please send SAE for more information and application form: TPW Recruitment, Homes for Homeless People (NS), Smithfield House, Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6BS. Tel: 021 622 1502.

BONDWAY NIGHTSHELTER, an emergency provision for Homeless men, require volunteers (aged 18-30), to work for approximately six months. Allowance and accommodation will be provided. We are recruiting throughout the year so welcome applications from those wishing to be considered at a later stage. For further details contact: The Volunteer Co-Ordinator, P. O. Box 374, London, SW8 1SJ, enclosing a S.A.E. (Due to interview restrictions applicants should be resident in the UK.

LONDON VOLUNTARY Service Council. Research Assistant required to volunteer at least one day per week for our fundraising group, using directories and entering information onto a computer. Full training will be given, plus lunch money and travelling expenses to office currently near Euston Station. For further information, please telephone Roland Doven on 01 388 0241.

WESTMINSTER Bereavement Service is seeking volunteers residing in or near the boroygh of Westminster to offer counselling support to one or two bereaved people in their homes. Training and regular group supervision is provided. Next training course starts on Wednesday evening, October 19th and consists of two further Wednesday evenings: 9 and 30 November and also two Saturdays: 29 October and 19 November. No qualifications are required but must be genuine, sympathetic and committed. If interested, please ring Gill Dunbar or Kathy Yorke on 01-289 6597 as soon as possible.

ISLINGTON MENCAP need a person to share a house with eight others, 6 of whom have a learning disability. Tenants are expected to live communally, sharing the cooking, shopping, cleaning and other communal activities. Rent is £25 per week inclusive. Please contact Paul Davies (support worker) at 404 Camden Road, London, N7 OSJ, tel 607-8762, for further information.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED If you are fit, can drive, with a sense of humour, have 2 to 6 months to spare and would like the experience of caring for a disabled person full-time in his own flat, then I have a place for you. Ideal for person interested in Social Work. Volunteers receive £35 per week and free accommodation. More details contact Alan Soffert on 01 736 8555.

help

The HELP programme is a 5 minute local programme appearing at 6.25 on Thames TV, three times a week. Here is a summary of next week's programmes.

TUESDAY 12 JULY – LONDON HISTORY WORKSHOP CENTRE

A unique archive of tapes and memorabilia telling stories of everyday London life - the London History Workshop Centre - is threatened with closure because the London Borough's Grants Committee has axed its grant. Soon, the projects and researches of hundreds of schoolchildren, pensioners, students and academics will be all the poorer without it. Viv Morris, a regular user of, and contributor to, the archive, tells us what the London History Workshop Centre means to her and her family. For more information ring after the programme on 01 388 2388 or write to:

The London History Workshop Centre, Mary Ward House, 42, Queen Square, London, WC1. Telephone: 01-831-8871.

WEDNESDAY 13 JULY – REPORT BACK

What have men on motorbikes and an elderly couple with a liking for music halls got in common? They're using their talents to help other people, having found inspiration from the HELP programme. Tonight we look back over the past series at the programmes which made our phones ring and ring...For our booklet on how the programme works and how to go about having your group featured, ring on the night on 01 388 2388 or write to:

HELP, P.O. BOX 11, LONDON, NW1 3HZ.

THURSDAY 14 JULY – NO TRANSMISSION

SEE YOU IN SEPTEMBER!

HELP • THAMES TV • EMBER HOUSE • 164/166 DRUMMOND STREET LONDON • NW1 3HR • TELEPHONE: 01 387 9494

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! The Association For All Speech Impaired Children (AFASIC) urgently needs regular help with simple clerical work such as stuffing envelopes. We also need someone who can enter basic information on a word-processor. Expenses within London paid, sandwich lunch provided, friendly atmosphere. Contact Helen: 01-236 3632/6487, AFASIC, 347 Central Markets, Smithfield, London, EC1 9NH.

BONDWAY NIGHTSHELTER, an emergency provision for homeless men, requires volunteers (aged 18-30) to work for approximately six months. An allowance and accommodation provided. We recruit throughout the year so welcome applications from those wishing to be considered at a later stage. For further details contact: Volunteer Co-Ordinator, P.O. Box 374, London, SW8 1SJ enclosing a S.A.E. (due to interview restrictions, applicants should be U.K. residents.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED to help children who need some extra attention. If you live in North London and have 2/3 hours per week to spare you can brighten the life of a lonely child and it will be fun for you too. Contact S.P.A.N. on 01-250-1223.

CARING VOLUNTEERS required by the Acton and Ealing Victim Support Scheme. Can you assist in offering advice and practical help to victims of crime. Full training and on-going support is provided. Expenses also paid. For further details ring Liz on 992 3326 during the day.

ARE YOU INTERESTED in mental health and have a few hours or more to spare each week on a regular basis? The MIND Centre 63 Ifield Road, SW10 needs you to help in our coffee bar, lunch clubs and second hand clothes shop, open 11am - 4pm, Monday to Friday. Also Weds evening Club and Sunday Lunch Club. Contact Helen Shaw 352 4285.

OXFORD MIND urgently requires volunteers for their two centres and for a new developing project in catering. For more details contact Jane Hope on (0865) 511702.

TIME AWAY THIS SUMMER? Places available on two residential playschemes run by Quaker International Social Projects (Ashton-in-Makerfield 23 July to 6 August and Epsom 30 July to 13 August) any skills considered. Please phone QISP on 01-388 1979 or write to QISP, Friends House, Euston Road, London, NW1 2BJ.

PART-TIME ORGANISER. A young, fast-growing, self-help charity in mental illness wishes to recruit organiser 2.00 to 5.00 Monday to Friday to work in our Richmond head office. Write to the Chairman, Manic Depression Fellowship Ltd, 51 Sheen Road, Richmond-Upon-Thames (Tel: 01-876-9688 evenings only). Travel expenses paid, plus a small honorarium.

THE MAUDSLEY HOSPITAL needs volunteers to work with patients in a variety of ways, offering companionship to individuals, attending a social club, driving or advocacy. Hours to be as little as 2/3 a week. Travel expenses paid. For furhter information please get in touch with Mary Lawton or Una Lietch at The Maudsley Hospital, Denmark Hill, London, SE5 8AZ, telephone: 01-703-6333.

VOLUNTEERS are needed for residential work with homeless people. Volunteers live in small group homes with the homeless. They offer friendship and encouragement as part of a small caring community. Good experience for people wanting to join one of the caring professions. Close to London. Full board, personal and holiday allowance are given. Minimum commitment six months. Please write to Medway Cyrenians, 104 Maidstone Road, Chatham, Kent, ME4 6DQ.

PARENTS ANONYMOUS is a voluntary telephone service for troubled people to get support in their time of need. If you are a parent and could spare some time weekly and feel you could listen, support, sympathise then please write for details of our next training to: 9 Manor Gardens, London, N7 6LA.

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Classified Advertising

Advertisements received by noon on Tuesday will normally be published the same week
Classified Display Rates:
Standard Rate: £11 per s.c.c.
Voluntary Organisations: £9.50 per s.c.c.
Linage Rates: 45p per word (minimum 20 words) Box No. £2.50
All advertisements subject to VAT at 15%
Correspondence should be addressed to
Classified Advertisement Department
New Statesman & Society,
Foundation House, Perseverance Works,
38 Kingsland Road, London, E2 8DQ
Advertising Staff
Hazel Stevens (Classified Manager)
Carol Anne Brown (Sales Executive)
Chris Gallagher (Sales Executive)
Linda Ring (Advertising Secretary)
Brian Cushion (Production)
Telephone: 01-739-1645
Fax 01-739-9307
Telex 28449

General Appointments

AUT ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS

Research Officer

Salary range £14,815-£20,760

The AUT ia a trade union and professional association with 30,000 members representing academic, senior administrative, senior library, senior computing and research staff in universities in the UK.

We require a Research Officer to head our research department. Applicants will need good research and writing skills, a commitment to trade unionism and potential to manage a small staff unit. The Research Officer will need expertise on the use of computers for financial, statistical and survey analyses. The post is a senior one with potential for promotion. The Research Officer works direct to the General Secretary and services the Association's Salaries & Grading Committee. A direct knowledge of the higher education system would be desirable.

For a more detailed job description telephone or write to: AUT, United House, 1 Pembridge Road, London, W11 3HJ Tel: 01-221-4370.

AUT is an equal opportunities employer

KENT PROBATION SERVICE

Probation Officer– Tunbridge Wells

Current Salary Range £9,753 to £13,506

Applications are invited for appointment as probation officers from C.Q.S.W. holders, either experienced or recently qualified, and from students expecting successful completion of training this year. In addition to the current vacancy at Tunbridge Wells, other vacancies within the county are anticipated.

The county gives opportunity for work in urban and rural areas The service is committed to giving opportunities to develop a variety of working methods.

Kent Probation Service has a generous in-service training programme for all probation officers. The management and staff are committed to a five year core element programme for newly appointed officers. This provides an induction course and a firm professional foundation for future careers in the Service. A range of training opportunities to develop officer potential exists throughout the subsequent career span.

Conditions of service in Kent are good, and temporary accommodation is sometimes available. There are both assisted car purchase and car leasing schemes. Removal expenses are paid in full and other disturbance allowances are gen- erous. Home to office mileage up to 20 miles per day is paid.

It is a condition of appointment in Kent that officers will, at some stage of their career be seconded to a penal establishment for a period.

If you would like to discuss the possibility of working in Kent, perhaps you would contact Mr John Lloyd, Assistant Chief Probation Officer, at the address below.

Further details and an application form can be obtained from Mr. R. G. Whitfield, Chief Probation Officer, 58 College Road, Maidstone, ME15 6SJ, telephone number Maidstone (0622) 50934. Completed application forms should returned to 58 College Road, Maidstone, by Friday, 15th July 1988.

LONDON SCHOOL OF HYGIENE AND TROPICAL MEDICINE

University of London

Keppel Street, London, WC1E 7HT

PART-TIME SECRETARY FOR NUTRITION POLICY UNIT

An interesting and varied job is offered to an adaptable secretary with good secretarial skills working for a group of teaching and research staff in the fields of nutrition policy, famine emergencies, and information systems.

We are looking for someone to work up to 21 hours per week (by arrangement). Starting salary will be on a scale £4667-£5565 (under review) inclusive.

Please write with full *curriculum vitae* to Helen Abbott, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Keppel Street, London, WC1E 7HT or telephone 01 636 8636 ext 201 for an application form and further details, quoting reference PP4. Closing date 22 July 1988.

INSTITUTE OF CHILD HEALTH

University of London

LECTURESHIP

Applications are invited for a post of non-clinical Lecturer in the Department of Child Psychiatry. The post is funded by the DHSS for a period of nineteen months. The main duties will be to organize a Clinical Training programme in Child Sexual Abuse for professionals dealing with sexually-abused children to assist in the development of management and training programmes for these professionals. Informal enquiries should be made to Dr A Bentovim, Department of Psychological Medicine, Hospital for Sick Children (Tel. 405-9200.)

Salary will be on the non-clinical lecturer scale in the range £13,365 - £19,310 *per annum plus* £1,450 *London Weighting per annum.*

Application forms and further particulars are available from the **Personnel Assistant, Institute of Child Health, 30 Guilford Street, London, WC1N 1EH, Tel. 01-242-9789 ext 2650,** to whom completed applications plus the names of three referees should be returned by Friday 29 July 1988.

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Bristol Polytechnic

RESEARCHER A

£7,419 - £8,481

The Learning about AIDS project (funded by AVERT and the Health Education Authority) seeks an enthusiastic and committed researcher to play a key role in the national dessemination of the health education materials it has developed. The post will commence from September 1st or as soon as possible thereafter and will be for 16 months in the first instance.

Applicants should have a first degree or its equivalent in social science, health or education, a sensitivity to equal opportunities issues involved in health education about HIV infection and AIDS, and experience of participatory styles of health education. Experience working with those most affected by AIDS would be an asset.

Informal enquiries relating to this post should be made to the Project Director Dr Peter Aggleton on 0272 741251, extension 2214. Interviews will be held on July 25 1988.

For further information and an application form, to be returned by 18 July 1988, please contact the Personnel Office, Bristol Polytechnic, Coldharbour Lane, Frenchay, Bristol, BS16 1QY on Bristol (0272) 656261 ext 2216 or 2205 or ring our 24 anser-phone service Bristol 652861.

Please quote reference number R/110/NS in all communications.

Avon is an Equal Opportunities Employer and considers applications on their suitability for the post regardless of sex, race, disability or sexual orientation.

COUNTY OF AVON EDUCATION SERVICE

Strathclyde

GLASGOW SUB-REGION
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

COMMUNITY EDUCATION WORKER

Yoker Neighbourhood Centre, 2418 Dunbarton Road, G14.

Salary: C.E.W. £9255-£12075 plus 7.5% Irregular Hours Payment and Weekend Enhancement

Applicants must possess the Diploma/Certificate in Youth and Community Studies or Diploma in Adult Education.

The successful applicant will be responsible for the supervision of manual staff; co-ordination and development of Centre programmes in line with council policies; the provision and development of adult learning opportunities, youth work and general services to Community Organisations.

Application forms and further particulars available from the Assistant Director of Personnel Services, Glasgow Sub-Region, 20 India Street, Glasgow, G2 4PF (Tel: 041-227-2260), to be returned quoting reference number GO6141 by 25th July 1988.

Unless otherwise stated the above post is open to applications from persons wishing to job share.

An equal opportunities authority

Strathclyde Regional Council

Classified Advertisements

Telephone 01-739 1645

WORKERS' EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION

Health Education for Women Training Project

THREE PART-TIME TUTOR-ORGANISERS

The WEA wishes to appoint 3 part-time Tutor-Organisers on an exciting, new project funded by the Health Education Authority (HEA). The project will be nationally based and has been funded for an initial two and a half years with a commitment from the HEA for a further 6 months. The project aims to develop training in the field of women's health education in a variety of settings (eg NHS, voluntary, statutory, community). Appropriate qualifications and experience in adult, community or health education are required.

The Tutor-Organisers will be based in 3 WEA Districts:

POST A: NORTH WESTERN DISTRICT
(Greater Manchester and surrounding areas)
26 hours per week

Post B: WEST MERCIA DISTRICT
(Staffordshire, West Midlands and surrounding areas)
26 hours per week

Post C: WESTERN DISTRICT
(Bristol, Swindon and surrounding areas)
17.5 hours per week

Salary Scale: £8,481 - £15,369 (pro rata)

Closing date: 25 July 1988.

For further details and an application form, please write indicating which post you are interested in to: WEA, 4th Floor, Crawford House, Precinct Centre, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9GH.

THE UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD
Department of Geography
Department of Town and Regional Planning

NEW TECHNOLOGY, SKILLS SHORTAGES AND TRAINING STRATEGIES

Applications are invited from Social scientists for a RESEARCH ASSOCIATE for three years from 1 October 1988 to work on a project examining the effect of new technology on the demand for and supply of skills in a local labour market. This is one of a number of projects funded by ESRC as part of the New Technology and the Firm Initiative.

Applicants should hold (or expect to hold) a PhD in one of the Social Sciences, be familiar with survey methodology and, preferably, have some experience of new technology, training and/or training agencies. Applicants with relevant research experience but without the PhD qualification will also be considered.

The project directors are Dr P Foley (Department of Town and Regional Planning) and Dr H D Watts (Department of Geography).

Initial salary between points 1 to 4 on the scale for Research and Analagous Staff, Grade 1A (£9,865 - £11,680 per annum), according to age, qualifications and experience.

Further details are available from Dr Watts at the Department of Geography, The University, Sheffield, S10 2TN (0742-768555 ext 4750)

Applications, with the names of two referees should be sent to Dr Watts at the above address to arrive not later than Thursday, 21 July. Please quote Ref. MAP/046/X.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER

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Ujima Housing Association Limited

requires

FINANCE OFFICER

Salary: £12,432-£13,173

The person appointed will be responsible for maintaining the Association's prime books of accounts, preparing quarterly and annual accounts and providing general accounting information for the Association.

We are looking for someone who is qualified or part qualified with one of the major accounting bodies, and with at least two years' experience. Preference will be given to those with a Housing Association background.

HOUSING AID CO-ORDINATOR

Salary: £11,322-£12,804

To manage Ujima's advice services to young black single homeless people.

Experience in interviewing, dealing with single homeless and local authorities, knowledge of legislation pertaining to homelessness an advantage. The person appointed will supervise three staff and also be responsible for managing the Association's Single Homeless Waiting List.

For an application form and job description contact: Ms Carol Dawes, Ujima HA Limited, Crown House, 187/193 Kilburn High Road, London NW6 7HY. Tel: 01-328 9777.

CLOSING DATE: FRIDAY 22 JULY 1988.

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whiteinch and scotstoun housing association ltd

HOUSING OFFICER (GRADE 5/6)

We require a Housing Officer to join a small team within a community-based housing association operating in the West of Glasgow.

The successful applicant will be involved in a range of housing management functions, reporting to committee and advising on policy formulation. The level of responsibility will be determined by qualifications and experience and, accordingly, the appointment will be made on either Grade 5 (£10,221-£12,045) or Grade 6 (£12,408-£14,232).

Candidates should have a degree and/or a diploma in housing, and housing association or other directly relevant experience. Applicants for our previously advertised Housing Assistant vacancy should not re-apply.

Written requests for job description and application form to:

The Secretary
Whiteinch & Scotstoun
Housing Association Limited
1040 Dumbarton Road
Glasgow
G14 9UL

Completed applications should be received by us no later than Friday 5th August 1988.

North British is a national organisation committed to decentralisation and the provision of a tenant-orientated housing service at a local level.

Due to expansion in our South Region, we have the following vacancies based in our Hendon Office.

ADMINISTRATION OFFICER

To ensure that the administrative and secretarial functions of this busy region are performed to the highest possible standards. You will be expected to supervise and motivate staff, to initiate and implement new administrative systems and procedures, to exercise budgetary control and to negotiate with office suppliers. The ability to type and take shorthand will be an advantage.

LETTINGS OFFICER

Responsible for the day-to-day administration of the waiting list and allocation of tenancies.

You will need to demonstrate the ability to deal sympathetically with the public; be familiar with the operation of a points system; be able to operate a VDU; and have a commitment to assisting people who are in need. Preference will be given to those with previous experience in housing.

SALARY:
£7,566-£8,250 per annum (review 1 July, 1988)
plus London Weighting Allowance.

Other benefits include 20 days' annual leave, flexible working hours and an excellent pension scheme.

The Association operates a 'No Smoking' Policy throughout its offices.

For further details and an application form, please contact: Mrs Sheila Grayston, North British Housing Association, 1st Floor, 35-37 Brent St., Hendon, London NW4 2EF. Tel: 01-202 8054.

North British is working towards becoming an equal opportunities employer. Our jobs are open equally to all, regardless of race, ethnic origin, sex or disability, and your application will be judged solely on its merits.

North British Housing Association

ASHRAM COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

Employment Development Worker
(Scale 6 - £10,191)

for community employment project in Sparkbrook, Birmingham, to develop employment initiatives especially small businesses, cooperatives, and community enterprises in mainly Asian neighbourhood. Background in employment development, small business advice, accountancy or marketing needed plus preferably, experience of working in a multi-cultural context.

Details from: The Coordinator, Sparkbrook Ashram Community Service Project, 23/35 Grantham Road, Sparkbrook, Birmingham, B11 1LU or tel: 021 773 7061.

The National Council for Civil Liberties neeeds a

CAMPAIGN ASSISTANT

To provide typing/administrative assistance and carry out some background research, liaison and information work on campaign issues. Full time. Salary: £10,400 (under review).

Send large SAE to: 21 Tabard Street, London, SE1 4LA.

Closing date: 22nd July, 1988.

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THE BETHLEM ROYAL HOSPITAL AND THE MAUDSLEY HOSPITAL SPECIAL HEALTH AUTHORITY

BETHLEM ROYAL HOSPITAL
Monk's Orchard Road, Beckenham, Kent

ADOLESCENT UNIT

There are vacancies currently for

NURSING ASSISTANTS

in this unit. We work with young people (14-18 years) with severe emotional/ mental problems.

For further information contact Gill Savoury, Clinical Nurse Specialist, 01 777 6611 Ext: and bleep 4155.

For application form and job description write to:

Personnel Department, Maudsley Hospital, Denmark Hill, London, SE5 8AZ.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES

needs a

WOMEN'S RIGHTS OFFICER

to conduct research, provide information and advice, primarily on equality of opportunity for women at work. F/T, funding guaranteed until March 1989. Salary £11,000 (under review).

Send large SAE to:

21 TABARD STREET
LONDON, SE1 4LA
Closing date: 25th July, 1988.

OV SELECTION

have a number of vacancies for temporary & permanent office staff with typing skills. We welcome enquiries from mature people as well as College leavers.

Phone Odette Veazey, OV Selection (Emp. Agy), Abford House, 15 Wilton Road, London SW1V 1LT. 01-828 8345.

Sutton is a growing commercial centre and a thriving business community situated on the edge of the Green Belt, neighbouring the Downs. We're just one hour from the coast, 30 minutes to Central London, handy for the M25, yet we offer every community service you could wish for.

No wonder — with so much to offer — people choose Sutton as the perfect place to live and work.

HOUSING & ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Senior Housing Adviser

£12,114-£13,965

Our Housing Aid Centre has expanded its activities in recent years and intends to increase its role in the community.

To enable it to do so, we are looking for someone to assist the Chief Housing Adviser in the Administration of the Centre which will include establishing and maintaining a computerised information base.

The person appointed will be an experienced adviser with the ability to understand and digest complicated legislation. A wide knowledge on housing and matrimonial law (including legislation relating to owner-occupiers), welfare and housing benefits, debt counselling and homelessness is essential.

You will be a sympathetic and adept interviewer who is able to liaise positively with other departments, statutory and voluntary bodies. Supervisory skills would be an advantage.

The job is stimulating and challenging for a person committed to helping those with housing problems.

We offer a newly increased relocation package of up to £7,500, where appropriate.

For an informal chat about the job, please ring Joyce Virgo on 01-661 5049.

Application forms and further details from: Chief Administrative Officer, Housing & Environmental Health Offices, St Nicholas Way, Sutton, Surrey. Tel: 01-661 5218.

Closing date: 22nd July 1988.

LONDON BOROUGH OF
SUTTON
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

CITY UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION

Community Action Worker

C.U.S.U. is looking for a Community Action Worker to implement and co-ordinate its work with and in our local community. The successful candidate for this part-time post (44 weeks, 25 hours per week including 5 weeks' holiday) will be a self-motivating creative person with some experience of community work. The running of special projects throughout the year, e.g. a half-term playgroup, pensioners' party and sports for the mentally handicapped, is an integral part of the job which means a flexible approach to the working week must be taken from time to time.

Salary £5,439 including London Weighting, paid monthly.

Contact Sue Parsons on 01-250-0955 for a job description or write to CUSU, Northampton Square, London, EC1V OHB.

CUSU strives to be an Equal Opportunities Employer.

ROYAL FREE HOSPITAL SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
(University of London)

ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE

Part-time Research Assistant

required for one year, in the first instance, to join a team investigating various aspects of alcohol-related physical harm. The work involves the identification, collection and preliminary analysis of statistics on mortality and morbidity and data from published and unpublished research studies. Studies with patients are also planned.

Previous research and computer experience and some statistical knowledge would be useful but not essential.

The hours of work will be variable and the rate of pay will be between £5 and £6 per hour, depending on qualifications and experience.

Further details are available from the **School Office, Room G650, R.F.H.S.M., Rowland Hill Street, London, NW3 2PF (tel: 01-794-0500, extn.4262)** to which applications in the form of full curriculum vitae with names and addresses of two referees should be sent by *15 July 1988*. Please quote ref. *PTRA/RN*.

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ASSISTANT HOMELESS OFFICER

Salary up to £10,116

Waverley is strengthening its team to provide a firm but responsive service to the homeless.

If you are part professionally qualified, looking for a challenge and can:
- help to develop and manage temporary housing and hostels,
- deputise for the Homeless Officer,
- help to set up administrative systems,
- can work under pressure,

we would like to hear from you.

Competitive conditions of service include:
- 22 days annual leave,
- subsidised staff restaurant,
- 37 hour flexible working week,
- payment of professional fee.

For an informal discussion, please telephone Mrs Sally Cooper, Homeless Officer, on 04868 4104. For an application form and further details, write to Ken Barnes, Personnel Officer, Waverley Borough Council, The Burys, Godalming, Surrey GU7 1HR or telephone Godalming 28173 (24 hr. answering service).

Borough of Waverley

London Borough of Camden

SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Day/Residential Care Intermediate Treatment Section

WEST HAMPSTEAD/KILBURN AREA

ASSISTANT INTERMEDIATE TREATMENT OFFICER (SC5)

£10,488 - £11,373 pro rata p.a.

(17.5 hours per week)

To run evening groups, some individual work with young people at risk and offenders.

Applicants must have relevant experience in working with difficult adolescents and the ability to organise groups.

Application form from and to be returned to: Social Services Departmental Personnel Unit, Willing House, 356/364 Gray's Inn Road, London, WC1X 8BH. Tel: 01-837 5621 (ansafone). Quoting Reference No: 10/103/NS. Closing date: 25th July, 1988.

Camden Services

equal opportunity employer

Applicants are considered on the basis of their suitability for the post, with equal opportunities for women, black/ethnic minorities, lesbians and gay men and people with disabilities, and regardless of marital status, age, creed/ religion and unrelated criminal conviction. All posts are open for job-sharing.

The Police Foundation

Administrator

The Police Foundation is a national charity which undertakes and promotes study and research on policing methods, organisation and effectiveness. We are looking for someone to take charge of our office administration and oversee the work of our Secretariat. You will be a key member of a small team and ideally should have experience in administering a small organisation. Experience in financial management and the ability to communicate well orally and in writing are essential. You should also have an interest in or show a willingness to become familiar with policing issues.

Starting salary between £12,184 and £13,028 on a scale rising to £15,208.

Further information and application form from The Secretary, The Police Foundation, 314-316 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, SW1V 1AA. Tel: 01-828-1438.

Closing date for applications: 21 July 1988.

UNIVERSITY SETTLEMENT BRISTOL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

WORKING WITH ELDERLY PEOPLE
A Voluntary Sector Challenge

Bristol Settlement is probably the largest multi-purpose community centre in the South West

Our new £350,000 Day Centre/Community Building needs a

SENIOR WORKER

to manage our Day Centre and develop our work with the Elderly

Social work, community work or community education background preferred

Salary spinal column pt.23, currently £9,255 pa ; funding guaranteed for 3 years.

Send s.a.e. to: BRISTOL SETTLEMENT, 43 Ducie Road, Barton Hill, Bristol, BS5 OAX. Closing date: 20th July, 1988.

Bristol Settlement has an Equal Opportunities Policy and we are committed to putting it into practice.

New Statesman and Society

Classified Advertising: Ring 01-739 1645

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Community Areas Executive Officer

Salary £16,000 – £17,000 range (Pay award pending)

Cumbria County Council is committed to the early foundation of Community Areas within the County through which policies and the application of resources will be more responsive to the needs of individual communities and in which the communities themselves can be centrally involved in the process of addressing their own needs.

To this end the Council wishes to appoint an Executive Officer who from the outset will take the key role in stimulating and securing the foundation and implementation of the Community Area process within communities which will be complementary to the work of other agencies.

This is a challenging free-standing role and will demand an innovative, free thinker with drive and initiative and with a commitment to this area of development. Candidates will not be from any particular background but will have a proven record and involvement in managing a successful venture demanding communication and diplomacy skills of high order, and full awareness of the wider social environment within which local authorities form one part, and will probably have experience at a senior level in planning development of a community related nature.

The salary will be within the range £16,000 – £17,000 depending on experience plus essential user car allowance – loan and lease facilities being available. The continuation of the post will be linked to the success or otherwise of the postholder in achieving results.

The post based in Carlisle, will involve working on a day to day basis as necessary around the County, and carries a benefits package including relocation to one of Britain's finest areas.

Application form and further particulars are available from the County Secretary and Solicitor, Cumbria County Council, The Courts, Carlisle CA3 8LZ. Tel: 0228 23456 Ext: 2212. Interviews will be held in August.

Closing date for applications is 29th July, 1988.

Post open to both men and women.

Cumbria

Centre For Local Economic Strategies

Research Assistant

Scale 4/5: £7,833 to £9,873

CLES is local government's economic think tank, the national forum for the development of local economic policies. The Centre sets out to link the work of local councils in job creation and economic planning with that of community, trade union and voluntary organisations, and the private sector.

We now seek to appoint on a one-year contract, a Research Assistant to work from our Manchester offices.

The successful candidate will have either a postgraduate degree in economics or in a related field, or research interests in a field of relevance to the Centre. Examples include macro-economic policy; public finance; the management of public expenditure, regional, urban or industrial policy, or the economics of the arts and cultural industries.

The work will include in-house CLES research; contract work for other bodies; and co-operation with other staff on research, information briefings, and seminars.

A knowledge of the innovative work of local councils in relation to their local economies would be desirable.

The post would be particularly suitable for someone trying to make a start in a research career, and applications from people wishing to work for a higher qualification will be welcome.

Further details and application form from:

Administrative Officer/Company Secretary
CENTRE FOR LOCAL ECONOMIC STRATEGIES
Heron House, Brazennose Street, Manchester, M2 5HD
Telephone: 061 834 7036

CANDIDATES ARE ADVISED THAT INTERVIEWS WILL MOST LIKELY BE HELD IN WEEK COMMENCING AUGUST 1st 1988.

CLOSING DATE: July 25th 1988

CLES is an equal opportunity employer.

BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

bfi

DEPUTY DIRECTOR

£28,374-£32,106 p.a.

(under review)

The British Film Institute exists to encourage the development of the arts of film and television. It operates the National Film Theatre, the National Film Archive and is responsible for the development of the Museum of Moving Image. Other activities include production, distribution and exhibition, preservation, education and grant-aiding. There are over 400 staff and the revenue budget is currently £15 million p.a.

The Deputy Director's responsibilities span all the central resource and administrative functions including finance, personnel, computing and the general management of the Institute.

This is a broad-based post operating in a complex, changing environment. Applicants should therefore possess a commensurate range of administrative and financial skills and have had relevant experience in either the public or private sector.

Further details and application form from: Personnel Department, British Film Institute, 21 Stephen Street, London W1P 1PL.

Closing date 25 July 1988.

We are an equal opportunities employer.

Community Service Supervisors

(£8,244 - £9,285 per annum)

required by OXFORDSHIRE PROBATION SERVICE in ABINGDON and BICESTER

Community Service Supervisors play a key role in finding work placements for offenders made subject to Community Service Orders by the courts, and ensuring that they perform suitable work under supervision. Tis is a demanding job requiring initiative, resilience and an interest in working with offenderrs in their local community. These posts may suit those wishing to prepare for social work training or mature applicants interested in working with offenders on a long term basis.

Applicants must hold a driving licence. A car allowance and expenses are payable, and car loan or car leasing arrangements are available in approved cases.

For an application form and job description contact:

The Administrative Section, Oxfordshire Probation Service, 43 Park End Street, Oxford, OX1 1JN. Tel: Oxford 815507

For informal discussion, please contact either: Paul Goodman, Senior Probation Officer, on Bicester 252443 OR Richard Aston, Community Service Organiser, on Abingdon 35619.

Closing date 7th July. Interviews will be held on 19th July 1988.

Oxfordshire Probation Service is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

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LEGAL SERVICES DIVISION

Social Services/Education

PRINCIPAL SOLICITOR
Ref: ASC 534
Salary £19,986 – £21,231 p.a. inc.

2 ASSISTANT SOLICITORS
Ref: CE 536/7
Salary £14,241 – £17,943 p.a. inc.

SENIOR LAW CLERK
Ref: CE 547
Salary £13,596 – £16,713 p.a. inc.

LEGAL ASSISTANT
Ref: CE 550
Salary £7,914 – £13,965 p.a. inc.

* Overtime payments
* Relocation Expenses

Recently the Council has been strengthening and restructuring its Legal Services Division to address the many problems arising from urban deprivation and has now decided to create a Social Services/Education Section of that Division, which will deal with a wide range of work, including childcare, adoption, mental health and provision for elderly and handicapped people, as well as education issues.

We are looking for 5 new legal staff to join our existing team. All 5 posts require people with a conscientious and efficient approach, an ability to work well under pressure and the capacity to work co-operatively with other members of the team.

Principal Solicitor – (solicitor or barrister)

Will be responsible for the new Social Services/Education Section of the Legal Services Division and will head a team of up to 12 staff, providing legal support in relation to all the Council's Social Services and Education obligations.

This is a job for an enthusiastic and hard-working lawyer who has considerable previous experience in these areas of law and is capable of taking effective decisions under pressure. The ability to lead and co-ordinate a large team of people is also essential.

Assistant Solicitor – (solicitor or barrister)

This post requires a hard-working and effective lawyer with a commitment to and preferably some experience in Social Services areas of law. You will be responsible for your own caseload including some advocacy and for giving advice at Committee.

Senior Law Clerk

This post requires a person of ability and efficiency with previous experience in Social Services legal work, capable of managing your own caseload and helping to supervise and train junior staff.

Legal Assistant

Requires an ability to learn and enthusiasm for hard work in a busy team dealing with an interesting and varied area of law. The ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing is also essential. Training in other aspects of the work will be given.

For an application form and further details for the post of Principal Solicitor (ref: ASC 534) please write to the Chief Executive's Department, Personnel & Management Services Division, Town Hall, East Ham, London E6 2RP or telephone 01 471 0619 (24 hour answering service). Interview date will be 2nd August 1988.

Application forms and further details for CE reference posts are available from the Chief Executive's Department, Town Hall, East Ham, London E6 2RP or telephone 01 472 1430 Ext: 23003/4, quoting appropriate CE reference. Interview dates: 3rd – 5th August 1988.

Closing date for all posts: 25th July 1988

Newham Council is committed to an equal opportunities policy. This means that the Council is committed to ensuring that no job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or is disadvantaged by condition of requirements which cannot be seen to be justifiable.
All jobs are open for job sharers, unless otherwise stated.

Newham
An Equal Opportunity Authority

The Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants

wishes to appoint an

JCWI

EDUCATION AND CAMPAIGN WORKER

- a new and challenging post, to help increase public awareness of *the effects of immigration law and build up a network of concerned* groups in Britain and Europe. Good communication skills and knowledge of race issues essential.

Further details and application form from Salma Dharamshi, JCWI, 115 Old Street, London, EC1V 9JR (251 8708).

Closing date: 25 July.

DIOCESE OF OXFORD
BOARD OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Applications are invited from suitably qualified Christian men or women, lay or ordained, for the post of **SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OFFICER** in *this large and varied diocese, which falls vacant on* October 1.

Application forms and further details may be obtained from:

The Revd. David Wainwright, Diocesan Church House, North Hinksey, Oxford, OX2 ONB. Telephone: 0865 244566 or (Home) 0993 812947.

Closing date for applications: September 1st. *(Readvertisement)*

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PSI

POLICY STUDIES INSTITUTE

Head of Development

New Part-time appointment

The Policy Studies Institute is already Britain's largest independent research Institute. The Council of the Institute has set itself the target of substantially increasing both the scale of our operations over the next quinqennium and the impact and influence of our work.

To help achieve these aims the Institute plans to make a key new appointment with two principal responsibilities:

a) Tapping new sources of funding and increasing the level of donations and other support from the private sector.

b) Promoting the work of the Institute through conferences, seminars and informal meetings with policy makers and practitioners.

We are looking for someone knowledgeable about social and economic research and committed to its value for improving policy-making; with good skills of communication and experience at a senior level in Whitehall, industry, business or voluntary organisations; who is able to demonstrate the capacity or aptitude to raise funds.

The appointment will be at the average professorial rate (currently £30,270 per annum) and we plan to employ someone half-time. The appointment will be for two years in the first instance.

Requests for further information and details of how to apply to:

Eileen Reed, Secretary to PSI,
100 Park Village East, London, NW1 3SR

Closing date for applications: 22 July 1988.

PSI IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER

THE INSTITUTION OF PROFESSIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS

General Secretary

Applications are invited for the post of General Secretary of the Institution of Professional Civil Servants to succeed the present occupant of the post when he retires in July 1989. The candidate selected by the National Executive Committee will be recommended by the Committee in a ballot arranged to conform with the provisions of the Employment Act 1988. If the successful applicant is not already employed by the Institution the appointment will begin on a designate basis from early in 1989.

The General Secretary's duties include responsibility for advising upon and implementing policy and other decisions of the Institution's governing bodies, and acting as principal spokesman and as Treasurer.

The post requires a thorough knowledge of industrial relations, skill in negotiations, sound judgment and the ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing. Candidates will also need to demonstrate a capacity to represent the extremely wide range of interests of the Institution's membership. Candidates without direct knowledge of these interests will need outstanding qualifications in other respects.

The salary for the post is £39,000 and is linked to Grade III pay in the Civil Service. There is a non-contributory superannuation scheme. Existing superannuation rights may be transferred. Retirement is compulsory at the age of 60. Annual leave is six weeks and other conditions of service are similar to those in the Civil Service.

Further information may be obtained from and applications, which should include the names of two referees, must be sent to:

The General Secretary
Institution of Professional Civil Servants
75-79 York Road, London, SE1 7AQ

to arrive not later than 29 July 1988.

THE IPCS IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER

DALCO HOMES

seeks to appoint an

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (Scale PO2)

Dalco Homes is a community based therapeutic organisation committed to rehabilitation for those suffering from psychiatric problems.

We are seeking a caring, innovative, experienced person for this responsible and challenging post.

You will possess skills in management, problem solving, team building and support, supervision, consultancy, planning and monitoring, evaluation and assessment.

You will also have qualifications and considerable experience in rehabilitation methods and residential care, be self-motivated and yet still be able to take a leading role within the team structure. Able to deputise for the Director in his absence and still take part in our out-of-hours activities and developments. You will be willing and able to offer commitment and skilled care.

We promise good support, both formally and informally, and opportunities to explore specialised interests and new ways of working within the overall framework of our team.

Application forms and job description from:

The Director, Dalco Homes, Mosell House, 707 High Road, London, N17 8AD.

Closing date: 1st August, 1988.

For further information or informal discussion, contact The Director, Dalco Homes, on 01-808-7725 during normal working days.

We are an Equal Opportunities Employer

CityPoly
City of London Polytechnic

Social Science Graduates

Unemployed?

Increase your employability by joining our Vocational Training Course in Advanced Applications of Information Technology.

The training will include computer appreciation, use of the latest packages and the application of simulation and modelling techniques to business and commerce, social and environmental problems.

This presents an exciting opportunity for six recent graduates (aged under 25) to join a year-long course, beginning October 1988. During training, course members will receive an income of £90 per week partially supported by the European Social Fund.

Details and application form from: Faculty Officer, CMAS, City of London Polytechnic, 100 Minories, London, EC3N 1JY. Tel: 01-283 1030 x430

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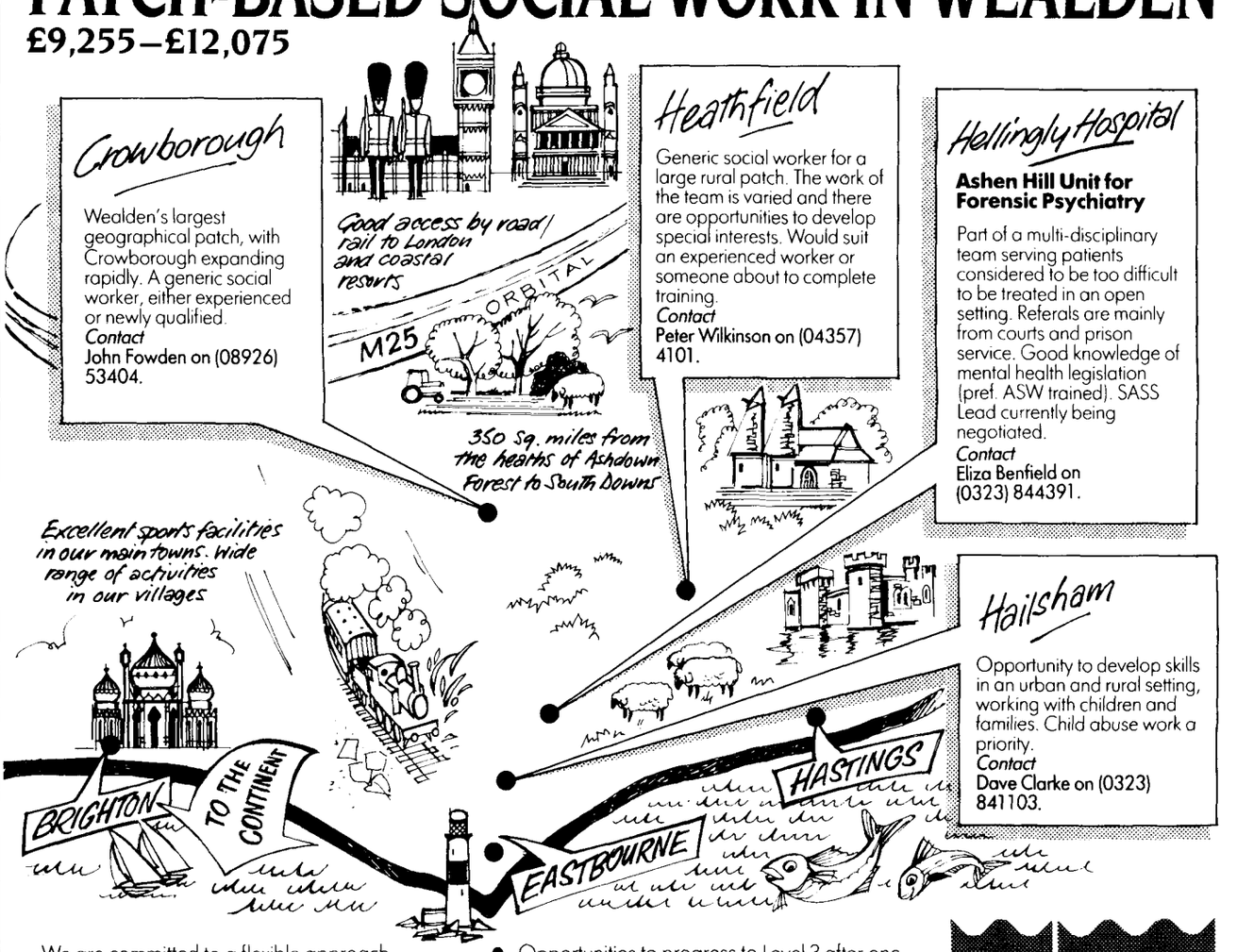
YOUR GUIDE TO THE ATTRACTIONS OF PATCH-BASED SOCIAL WORK IN WEALDEN

£9,255–£12,075


Crowborough
Wealden's largest geographical patch, with Crowborough expanding rapidly. A generic social worker, either experienced or newly qualified.
Contact
John Fowden on (08926) 53404.
Good access by road/rail to London and coastal resorts
M25
ORBITAL
350 sq. miles from the heaths of Ashdown Forest to South Downs
Heathfield
Generic social worker for a large rural patch. The work of the team is varied and there are opportunities to develop special interests. Would suit an experienced worker or someone about to complete training.
Contact
Peter Wilkinson on (04357) 4101.
Hellingly Hospital
Ashen Hill Unit for Forensic Psychiatry
Part of a multi-disciplinary team serving patients considered to be too difficult to be treated in an open setting. Referals are mainly from courts and prison service. Good knowledge of mental health legislation (pref. ASW trained). SASS Lead currently being negotiated.
Contact
Eliza Benfield on (0323) 844391.
Excellent sports facilities in our main towns. Wide range of activities in our villages
Hailsham
Opportunity to develop skills in an urban and rural setting, working with children and families. Child abuse work a priority.
Contact
Dave Clarke on (0323) 841103.
BRIGHTON
TO THE CONTINENT
HASTINGS
EASTBOURNE

We are committed to a flexible approach, developing local facilities relevant and responsible to individual needs. To facilitate these aims, local management of budgets has been introduced.

- Small controlled workloads in well equipped patch offices
- Clear supervision policy, particularly child abuse work
- Opportunities to progress to Level 3 after one year
- Investment in training
- Leased car scheme, car loan scheme, assistance with relocation expenses

If you are interested contact any of the above telephone numbers or send for a comprehensive information pack to Wealden Area Office, 7 George Street, Hailsham BN27 1AD.

East Sussex

East Sussex is committed to equal opportunities

New Statesman and Society Recruitment

For full details on rates and dates of future special issues please contact the Classified Advertisement Department and ask for Hazel, Carol Anne or Chris

Telephone: 01-729-1645

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Ethnic Minorities Arts Officer

SO1 £12,114-£12,867 inclusive

More in the mainstream less at the margin! That's how we see arts provision for both general arts programmes and specifically for ethnic minority arts.
Our Ethnic minority arts programmes have steadily increased and developed across the whole spectrum: music; dance; poetry; visual arts; workshops; recitals and entertainments.
We now have a challenging opportunity for the right person to take our commitment still further.
We require someone who has at least 2 years' experience working and promoting in an Asian and/or Black Arts environment, together with an understanding of one or more of the Asian communities. You will need good communication skills in order to liaise with wide sections of the community.
This post is Section 11 funded.

For an application form telephone 01-572 5513 (24 hour answer service) quoting ref: LS/12/15 or write to the Director of Leisure Services, Civic Centre, Lampton Road, Hounslow TW3 4DN.
Closing date 15 July 1988.

Hounslow
An Equal Opportunity Employer

Courses/Training

M.A. in Applied European Studies

This is a new interdisciplinary course, part-time over two and a half years which combines the study of the economics, politics, law and business of the European Community with the study of the language and policy making environment of either France, Germany or Spain.
The course is designed especially for managers and administrators who wish to apply and develop their areas of knowledge to the European Community, particularly in the context of the completion of the internal market by 1992.
Further details from:

Teresa Lawlor,
Department of Modern Languages,
South Bank Polytechnic, London SE1 0AA.
Tel: 01-928 8989, ext 2748

SOUTH BANK POLYTECHNIC

Booksellers

SCARCE BOOK Service: Social-Economic History; World Politics. State wants. 01-876-7254. Hammersmith Books, Barnes High Street, SW13 9LR.

REVIEW COPIES and other books in fine condition bought and sold by Vermilion Books, 57 Red Lion Street, London, WC1 Telephone: 01-242-5822.

Assessment

DYSLEXIC? Learning Difficulty? Psychologist assesses children and adults with dyslexic or learning difficulties. Telephone Dr Moody on (01) 272 6429.

Conferences

Liberal Movement Assembly

Wolverhampton 15-17 July
Energy: Stuart Boyle
Internationalism: Prof. E.P. Thompson
Civil Liberties: Gareth Pierce
PLUS
Paddy Ashdown, MP and Alan Beith, MP on the hustings
Details: Tony Hancock (0706) 817968
Everyone welcome

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Holidays/Travel

DISCOUNTED FLIGHTS Italy, France, Scandinavia, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Austria. Yugo. Charter/Schedule. AIRFORCE. 01-506-2233. ATOL 1817.

JOURNEY LATIN America. Low cost flights, holiday journeys, 3-6 weeks. JLA, 16 Devonshire Road, London, W4 2HD. 01-747-3108.

PAELLA EVERY Sunday on the flower terrace. Catalonia. Small, relaxed hotel, children welcome. Beaches, walking. 01-249-3727 or 010 3472 321202.

Exhibitions

EDDIE CHAMBERS EXHIBITION: Art about Garvey - "Breaking that Bondage/Plotting that Course" on Thursday July 7 - Friday August 5. The artist discusses the legacy of Marcus Garvey, "The Blackest Star" in a talk on Wednesday July 20 at 6.30 pm. Africa Centre, 38 King Street, Covent Garden, London, WC2. Telephone: 01-836-1973.

Personal

QUIET OLDER GENTLEMAN seeks decent accommodation ; willing to provide part-time bookkeeping/accountancy in return. Full-time position acceptable. Anywhere! Please write in complete confidence. Box (27) 034.

LITERATE TYPING, prompt, dependable, cheap. Telephone: 051 727 6448.

For Sale

THE PANKHURST TRUST, urgently needs funds to restore the house where Emmeline Pankhurst founded the suffragette movement. You can help by buying our polyester/cotton sweat shirts, available in suffragette colours of green, purple; sizes S/M/L/XL. £9.95 from the Pankhurst Centre, Nelson Street, Manchester.

Meetings

THEOSOPHY Wisdom Religion Informal meetings Sundays 8pm on Reincarnation, Karma, Death, Clairvoyance, Spiritualism, Cyclic law, SAS for programme, information: ULT, 62 Queens Gardens, London, W2 3AH.

Billboard — Theatre

NATIONAL THEATRE 01 928 2252. Olivier (open stage) THE SMALL FAMILY BUSINESS, 'TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE. Lyttleton (proscenium stage) CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF, THE CHANGELING. Cottesloe (small stage) CYMBELINE, THE WINTER'S TALE, THE TEMPEST. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information on 01 928 2256.

Heartsearch

DATELINE'S PSYCHOLOGICALLY accurate introductions lead to pleasant friendships, spontaneous affairs and firm, lasting relationships including marriage. All ages, all areas. Free details from: Dateline Computer Dating, Dept. (7NS), 23 Abingdon Rd. London, W8. Phone: 01-938-1011.

ENRICH YOUR Social Life! Designed for the discerning and sophisticated, Savoir Vivre provides more interesting introductions. Send SAE to: Savoir Vivre, Ref: NS L, Tynron, Thornhill, DG3 4LG or tel 084 82 611 anytime.

HAMPSHIRE: ROMANTIC MALE (35) professional single, socialist, non-smoker into films, theatre and countryside, seeks similar women for friendship and hopefully a lot more. Box (27) 035.

FOR INTERESTING non-computerised introductions in the East Midlands contact Diane Ballantyne at Connections, 9-10 Ashby Square, Loughborough, Leics.

CHEERFUL, ATTRACTIVE, travelled lady, 44, presently rural Scotland, demi-veg., non-smoker, daughter, 11, seeks similar un-tied male; literary, outdoor interests. View long-term, will travel. Box (27) 036.

LEEDS WOMAN, 34, seeks non-smoking man who likes to be independent for mixture of fun and peace. Box (27) 037.

MALE, 34, 6FT - Caring, compassionate and sensitive, seeks similar non-smoking young lady for friendship and hopefully a lasting relationship. I am comfortably off with a house and a car but I am much more interested in inter-personal relationships and living life, than in acquiring material goods. My interests are reading, walking, cycling, days out in the countryside, the theatre, conversation, photography and Radio 4. Cleveland/N. Yorks. Box (27) 038.

THINK! Wouldn't you prefer to join a photographic introduction agency that cares about your individual requirements and offers a friendly and confidential service? Wouldn't you prefer to join the Singles Register? 458 8344.

OLD FRIENDS: an introduction agency for the over forties. Loneliness is not inevitable. Details from: Anne Brent, 18a Highbury New Park, London, N5 2DB. Tel: 01-226-5432.

A LOVELY LADY, unusual, cosmopolitan, intell., cultured, tall, attractive, sensitive, with a lot to offer is looking for a male companion (50s). Curious? Interested? Then please write to Box (25) 019.

ATTRACTIVE, PROFESSIONAL MAN, 59. Seeks a warm natured, non-smoking woman - interested in the Arts - slim to medium build. London or London accessible. Box (26) 030.

DRAWING DOWN THE MOON "The Mensa of Introduction Agencies" (The Independent). Tel: 01-937-8880 or 01-938-2151.

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THE DIGGER

Michael Leapman bites back on the pesticide issue: what spud do you like?

When I took on this column I had not expected to be abused in the headline of the very first instalment. "Shame on him," wrote the sub-editor, responding to my revelation that I do not abjure chemical pesticides or fertilisers. I want to dispose of this issue right away, with a quick burst of the spray gun, before it becomes the *leitmotif* of the whole enterprise.

It is a question of degree. Obviously there are some chemicals I would not use on the allotment on pragmatic grounds—cyanide, for instance, or napalm to burn off the weeds. On the matter of ethics the position is less clear cut. Those who argue passionately for natural methods forget that the whole of horticulture is unnatural. Left to itself, the allotment would not grow vegetables in neat rows but would be a mass of dense herbage. (Some unimpressed visitors contend it is rather like that now.)

Look at it this way. The blackfly have me to thank for the succulent broad bean plants that attract them. Tough luck that I curtail their illicit feast with my chemical spray, but I do not see that in using it I am guilty of distorting nature to any greater extent than I was by cultivating the plot in the first place. I judge aphids and broad beans to be equally incapable of experiencing pain, and in any conflict between them I know whose side I am on.

Enough of this: to my oats, or rather to my spuds. I usually get three rows of potatoes from a 13lb bag of seed. (When I write of rows I mean a standard allotment row of 25 tion—gardeners will resist metrication to the last.) For the past few seasons I have grown Marfona, a newish second early variety which matures a couple of weeks before the main crop from a late March sowing.

Last year we had a damp June and July and the yield was marvellous: good fat potatoes equally suitable for baking, roasting, boiling and mashing. Kept in a shed behind the house, they lasted us through until May. This year has been drier and I have been soaking the emerging plants with the hose from time to time. Now, with the flowers appearing, the experts say I should be conscientiously earthing them up by drawing the soil around them to make a ridge, preventing the tubers from getting too close to the surface. The tool to use for this is a draw hoe, with which you can theoretically carve a neat little gully between the rows.

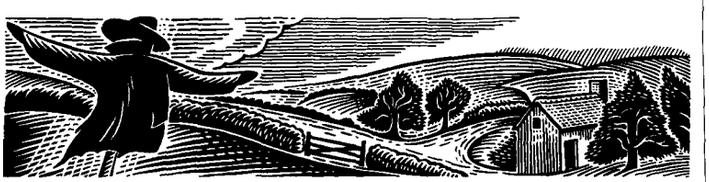
The trouble is that after all that watering the ground is as hard as concrete in places and the hoe makes little impression: experts tend not to take account of that kind of practical problem. If the rows were a bit farther apart I could use a spade, but I am always looking to save space in the spring and planted them too close together. So they will have to go largely unearthed this year and it will be interesting to see what effect that has on the yield.

If you like new potatoes, it's time to take a trial digging of one or two to see if any are of a useful size yet. I'm too mean to do much of that. I prefer to let them mature and get the best possible value in terms of tonnage: never mind the delicate flavour, feel the weight. For the same reason I am reluctant to harvest things like lettuce, carrots and turnips until they have grown to their full size. The result is that they are all ready at the same time and I have to give the bulk of them away to prevent them running to seed.

We gardeners get set in our ways and are reluctant to learn from experience.

FRINGE BENEFITS

Colin Ward finds a group of young, unemployed people in Hull are building their own enterprise.



Despite the Humber Bridge, Hull is a city too far out on a limb to have an office boom like Leeds or a shopping boom like Sheffield. Its port is a shadow, its fishing a memory and its shipbuilding a ghost. Its biggest industry is education.

One effect of Hull's isolation and depression is that Victorian terraced houses to which little has been done for decades are still relatively cheap. Forty-seven per cent of the housing stock belongs to the council yet at least 3,500 families are officially described as homeless, and this minimal figure ignores the young, single and footloose and all those teenagers leaving home after a family row or a broken marriage.

Three years ago, young, unemployed Reg Salmon borrowed enough in small loans from trusting friends to get a mortgage on a small house which together they set about renovating. With that house as security they got a bank loan to buy a second house. Then with the help of Humberside Cooperative Development Agency they set up a building cooperative, Giroscope Ltd, whose five other directors are Robert Amesbury, Martin Newman, Sarah Paton, Michael Shutt and Simon Wheatley. All are under 25 and all were unemployed.

The directors who got the £40 a week paid under the enterprise allowance scheme pooled it with those who got £30 a week dole. The aims of the co-op are "the purchase, renovation, modernisation and furnishing of houses in a poor condition" and "the renting out of these house to unemployed people and to other disadvantaged groups in society, such as single parents and disabled people."

The co-op now has six houses and accommodates 25 young unemployed people and four children. Two more houses are on the way. Having earned credibility it finds it easier to get loans and has benefited from grants from the Hull and East Riding Charitable Trust and from Charity Projects. Its members pay themselves no more than the £30 a week they would get on the dole.

I found them in their office in Glencoe Street, off the Anlaby Road, and asked about their future. They explained how everything had got better as they went along. Their first house had depended totally on mutual trust and on robbing Peter to pay Paul. By now they had all acquired building skills and experience, as well as management know-how, and were in good standing with builders' merchants. A network of well-wishers tipped them off about cheap houses coming onto the market. They believe that once they have bought and renovated 20 houses their operation will be self-financing. They don't want to grow indefinitely and they don't want to become a convenience for the city's social services.

They are willing to train people and to share their experience, though they warned that, especially with the impact of the new social security regulations on the homeless young, their precariously balanced budget would only work in those northern towns and cities where it is still possible to buy houses cheaply and to put in a great deal of work.

From experience they scorn the government's faith in the private landlord.

"Many of the people operating in the private rented sector," they declare, "are tyrants for whom extortion, intimidation, violence, humiliation and overt prejudice are an everyday part of their business.

Much of the accommodation available is squalid, damp, verminous, cold, small and insecure. Contacting the Fair Rent Officer or Environmental Health Department often results in illegal (and possibly violent) eviction."

When I asked the co-op members why their example hadn't been followed all over the place, they laughed. "It depends on three things," Reg Salmon explained. "One is being willing to work very hard. Another is to do it for very little money. And the third is the one that makes sense of the other two: a kind of political and social awareness."

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ENDGAMES

WEEKEND COMPETITION

No 3033 Set by E O Parrott
A secret report is said to have revealed recently that the water supply of this country is dangerously polluted with aluminium. Provide extracts from other secret reports revealing other plausible horrors. Alternatively, provide subsequent government press releases which seek to calm the population and put on a brave face.

No 3030 Set by E O Parrott
A Mills & Boon story in verse.

Report by Ms de Meaner
I have never *seen* such a lot of "goolies", "poofs" (shame on you!), "how's-your-father", "heaving and bashing on", "vaginas", infidelity involving married men with three children and, lastly, smut. Well, not since the famous comp 2590, at any rate, which the printers refused to set because it was so obscene. No names need be mentioned at this point, as you will all recognise the fruits of your lewd and overheated minds. I shall, however, keep a few on file for future use and possible blackmail. One plot even had the lover being sent away at the end because he'd rather "hold his own" than make love to the heroine! A large number of you seem never to have *read* any Mills & Boon as far as I can tell. None of that sort of thing occurs, I can assure you, and if it does it certainly isn't mentioned—and no decent Mills & Boon heroine would *ever* describe her future husband as "well-hung". The dire standard of most of the entries makes me quite emotional about the ones that made the grade. Ten pounds to the winners and an extra fiver for Susie Frail for getting it absolutely right.

On a trip in Yugoslavia
Edith fell for Serb Leandro.
He, a most respectful suitor,
Never touched her, offered
marriage,
And she stayed, learned
Serbo-Croat,
Earned a pittance in a salon,
Lived in squalor, while he studied
Far away in Sarajevo.

But he had a brother, Niko,
Who resolved to thwart the marriage
—Niko, feared by fair Edita.
Then she found that her Leandro
Was a drunkard, thief and idler
Who had wrongly thought her
wealthy.
Niko was the better brother;
It was Niko that she married.

John Marriott

Melissa Strangeways, sweet ward
sister,
Spurns Lord Tunbridge, macho
blister.
But yearns to know, and even fondle
Handsome houseman, Grant
Smith-Wandle.
And then—oh joy!—it is the time
To do the annual pantomime.
The Cinderella is Melissa,
And Grant (Prince Charming) has to
kiss her,
Melissa thinks he's growing fond,
But sees him dining with some
blonde.
Is he, perchance, another blister?
Then Sister learns it was his sister!
Whilst saving patient, Grannie Wells,
They meet again. It's wedding bells!

E O Parrott

She saw him ride along the heathered glen
A rugged shape astride a rugged roan,
They met at dinner, danced together, then
They pledged their hearts to be each other's own.
"She doesn't know!" The cats behind the screen
Hissed loudly for her. "Should we tell her all?"
In tears she ran and broke upon the scene:
Deep in the arbour, he, so strong and tall,
Embraced a blonde! She tore her ruby hair.
(She knew not of his orphaned cousin Jane
Who'd just arrived in need of tender care.)
That day she left and took a random plane.
She, duped by doubtful men, faced gross disgrace;
In hot pursuit he resuced her from shame,
And then in rugged, rough and tight embrace
Gave her his old aristocratic name.

D E Poole

He was dashing, dusky, deepish,
A Menelaus bound for Troy;
She was husky, Meryl Streep-ish,
With just a dash of Myrna Loy.

At the ballroom, at his shoulder,
Something in her stomach curled:
If he'd fold her, hold her, mould her,
He'd hurl her to a brand new world!

Night, and in the sudden flooding
Swirling through his proud estates,
Here he came, his heartbeat
thudding,
Saved her from the tidal Fates.

Never-ebbing passion flowing,
Then there burst a splash of kisses
He, astride his quick boat, rowing,
She, the French Lieutenant's Mrs.

Susie Frail

In stormy Cornwall Heiress Prue,
Just out of ladies' college,
Stares out on sea and moorland view
And dreams of carnal knowledge.

So she takes up with Guy Despard
Green-wellied and blue-eyed.
He's clever, ruthless, rich and hard
But sensitive inside.

Thus solac'd, Guy is soon all right.
We end with wedding bells.
And now they face a future bright,
Shacked up in Tunbridge Well.

N H Bailey

Love in Bonsai-land: a haiku

Honey meets cool Guy;
Paradise is deferred till
Orange-blossom time.

Margaret Rogers

Eternal Triangle

John.
John wanted.
John wanted Mary.
John wanted Mary to.
John wanted Mary to love.
John wanted Mary to love him.
But Mary
fell for
John's friend Jim.

David Cram

IF THE CAP FITS

No 75

Arthur Scargill finally gets to hand Neil Kinnock a Sheffield steel rose-bowl (Don't drink it Neil!) and make up before the wondering eyes of the miners at their conference in Great Yarmouth last week. Captions, speech or thinks bubbles on a postcard please by Friday, 15 June. £10 for the winner.

No 73: Winner

Mulroney: "What's your current exchange rate?" Thatcher: "About one major cabinet row a week." *(N Thomas, Bournemouth.)*

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Sauvignon Blanc 1987 – *fully dry, from Csopaki by Lake Balaton* 20.20

Gwurztraminer 1987 – *spicy, flowery, fair amount of nose. Medium dry from Villany* 21.20

Olaszrizling 1987 – *green tinge, grapey nose, steeley character. Medium dry from Etyeki* 21.20

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Prices include VAT and delivery (UK mainland) for orders of 5 or more cases, under 5 cases freight £3 per order, 10+ cases less £1.10 per case. Full list from: **Wines of Westhorpe Ltd**, Unit L-22, Park Avenue Estate, Sundon Park, Luton LU3 3AE. Tel. 0582 598040.

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CHESS

In the *grand prix* tournament in Belfort, while Short and Speelman have been becalmed in mid-table, Jan Ehlvest is the player who has done most to enhance his reputation. One can hardly overlook such a perfect anthology piece as this startling little miniature from the 8th round:

Ehlvest-Andersson, Belfort 1988. Sicilian Defence.
1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 e6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nc6 5. Nc3 a6 6. Be2 Qc7 7. f4 Nxd4 8. Qxd4 b5 Over the next few moves Black shows a curious reluctance to play ...d7–d6. What does Ulf hope to gain from omitting such a normal Sicilian move? **9. Be3 Bb7 10. 0-0-0 Rc8 11. Rd2 Nf6 12. Bf3 Be7 13. Rhd1 0-0?** After this he has to pay for the omission—13...d6! **14. e5! Bxf3 15. gxf3 b4 16. exf6 bxc3** If 16...Bxf6 17. Qxb4 wins. **17. Rg2 Qb7 18. Rxg7+ Kh8** Even after 19. b3 Black's chances seem poor. But Ehlvest finds something much more destructive. **19. Rg8+! 1-0.** For if 19...Rxg8 20. fxe7+ Rg7 21. Rg1 Qxb2+ 22. Kd1 Qb1+ 23. Bc1 Rcg8 24. Qxg7+ and 25. e8=Q+.

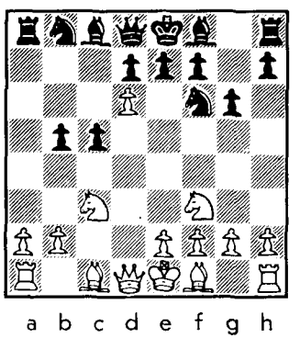
It is considered a great achievement for anyone to take the full point away from an encounter with Ulf Andersson. If you want fair recognition for your achievements, avoid playing in tournaments with children and computers. Thus the one thing about the **Watson, Farley & Williams International** (London, 27 May-7 June) that has been given overwhelming salience is that a 14 year old, Matthew Sadler, scored an IM norm. However, it was Paul Motwani of Scotland who actually won the tournament, though even in doing so he fell a point short of what he was really seeking—a second GM norm. And besides, there was plenty of fine play from all the competitors. The distinction of playing the most spectacular move of the tournament goes to David Norwood for White's 11th in the following game:

Norwood-King, WF & W 1988. Reti v Dutch.
1. g3 d5 2. Nf3 c6 3. Bg2 Bg4 4. 0-0 Nd7 5. d4 e6 6. Nbd2 f5!? It does look like a good idea from Daniel King, to play a Dutch with the QB outside the pawn-chain. **7. c4 Bd6 8. Qb3 Rb8 9. cxd5 exd5 10. Qd3 Qf6** Awkward, but if 10...Ne7 11. Ng5. **11. e4!! Bxf3** White gets a crushing attack after 11...fxe4 12. Nxe4 dxe4 13. Qxe4+ Be6 14. Re1. **12. e5 Qe6 13. Nxf3 Be7 14. b4 h5?** There must be a better defence than this. But it is hard to retain one's balance after such a tactical blow. **15. h4 g6 16. b5 Nh6 17. bxc6 bxc6 18. Bg5 Nb6 19. Qa6 Qd7 20. Rae1 Nc4 21. Rb1 Rb6 22. Rxb6 Nxb6 23. e6 Qc7 24. Bf4 Qd8 25. Qxa7 Ng4 26. Bc7 1-0.**

The even greater distinction of introducing the most important theoretical innovation goes to Jonathan Levitt. In fact Levitt has found something that 1. d4 players have long been searching for—a move that can shake the **Benko Countergambit**. After **1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 c5 3. d5 b5 4. Nf3 g6 5. cxb5 a6 6. Nc3 axb5** Levitt's move is **7. d6!?** (*see diagram*).

At the WF & W tournament White lost both the games in which the move was tried, but I still think it will repay further analysis.
Levitt-Hodgson went **7...Bg7 8. dxe7 Qxe7 9. Nxb5 0-0 10. e3 d5 11. Be2 Nc6 12. 0-0 Bf5** and Black had more *than value for a pawn. But White can* certainly improve on this—eg, with 10. Qd6!.
Sadler-Hodgson, three rounds later, varied with **7...Qa5 8. e3 exd6 9. Bxb5 Ne4! 10. Bd2 Nxc3 11. Bxc3 Qxb5 12. a4 Qc4 13. Bxh8 Ba6 14. Rc1 Qe4 15. Qb3 Nc6 16. Bc3 Bh6 17. Qc2 Bd3** and again the imaginative Hodgson had good compensation, this time for the exchange. But next time White can do better. Shamkovich suggests 8. Nd2!? (having in mind such variations as 8...b4 9. Nce4 or 8...Bb7 9. e4 Nxe4 10. Ndxe4 Bxe4 11. Bxb5 Bg7 12. 0-0 Bxc3 13. Qe2! Bf6 14. Bd2 Qb6 15. Qxe4 etc). That is promising, though it seems to me there might just be something even stronger.

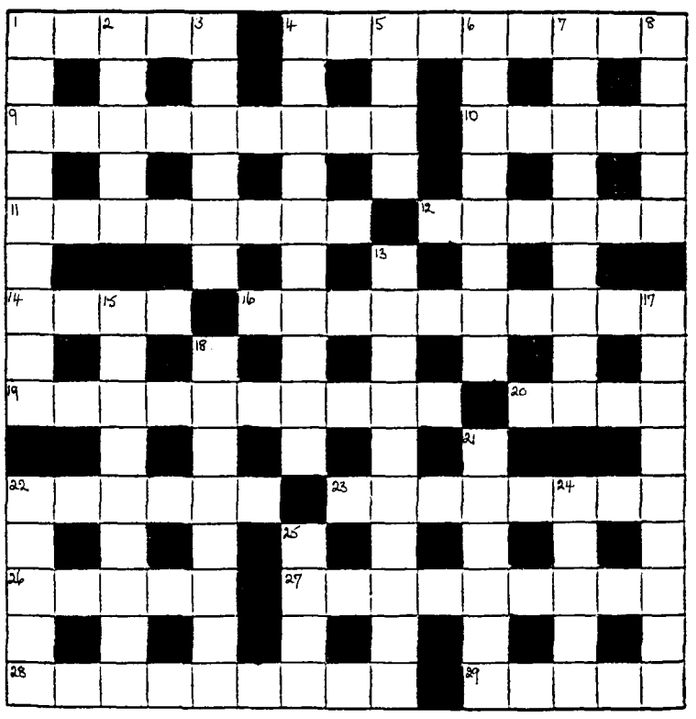
Last week's position
(4r1k1/4r2p/p3R1p1/5p2/Pp3N1P/1P3PP1/1q1R2K1/3nQ3) from **Andersson-Hjartarson, Belfort 1988**: The game ended **1...Rxe6 2. Qxd1? Rd6! 0-1**, a real pin-up. White is also in trouble after 2. Nxe6 Qxb3! and 2. Qxe6+ Rxe6 3. Rxb2 Nxb2 4. Nxe6 Nxa4!, though continuing 5. Nd4 in this last variation is the line of most resistance.



George Botterill

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1600, New Statesman & Society, Foundation House, Perseverance Works, 38 Kingsland Road, London E2 8DQ, by first post 18 July.



Name _____

Address _____

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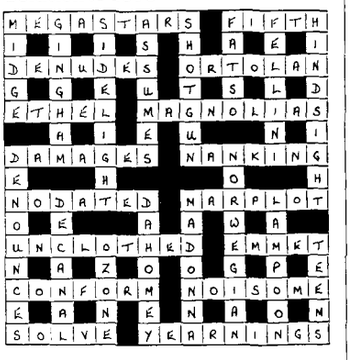
Crossword 1600

ACROSS
1. Did not like an unusual death (5)
4. In low temperatures man needs source of heat (9)
9. Author who provides note 2 (4,5)
10. *Inferior ingredient of a marvellous* year's output (5)
11. Nerve-centre of much sought after member of the group? (8)
12. Knight who discovers a point in profit (6)
14. Home for a drink and what sounds like the sea (4)
16. Brown seems to be of international calibre (10)
19. Expel people before starting to try their conduct (10)
20. The responsibility is ours (4)
22. *Rain indicator* (6)
23. The fighter has to spew forth loud anger (8)
26. As swiftly as the old man backs one (5)
27. Possibly did for two found on the beach (9)
28. Newspaper company they impress (9)
29. It is nearly all owing to a lot of pigs that it is dirty (5)

DOWN
1. Hothead and mad rogue turn into defenders of the state (4,5)
2. Where I enter the revolution (5)
3. For the sober in charity there is a bit of baccy (6)
4. Insignia of company at duck breeding places (4,2,4)
5. Florence's flower (4)
6. Nile half made use of by peasants (8)
7. Valuable service which could be auctioned (9)
8. The dean becomes a fellow only in your absence (5)
13. Chief motive of mater in mating season (10)
15. One page is devoted to work for agents (9)
17. When you remain without turning red (9)
18. Producers put the colour back into beers when they have been brewed (8)
21. Regular although satisfied without the *Times* leader (6)
22. Tread heavily although soft floor coverings are taken up (5)
24. Figures of those not in favour of following one (5)
25. "England expects" discovers her in retreat (4)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1598



Prizewinners to 1598
Dr R. J. Green (Southampton)
Glyn Haggett (Aylesbury, Bucks.)
J. R. Thomas (Wrexham, Clwyd)

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Diana Eden bets that when your nearest and dearest croak, you'll be first to fight for the family fortune.

We have a saying in the north of England—actually, we have many, but being charitable by nature I'll content myself with one—"where there's a will there's a way wide open for a *rare* old family barney". This pithy little phrase (and, on balance, we're as full of pith up north as any fancy southern cousin) has been passed down from generation to generation of exhausted solicitors' clerks.

What it means, in practice, is that when Great Aunt Edie dies, crazed clans lunge at each other's throats and blood-ties are bloodily untied over the vexing issue of who is most entitled to the old bat's even older corner cupboard.

Now, it has come to my attention since settling between the sprawling cemeteries of the overcrowded south, that The Corner Cupboard—that ancient craftsman's symphony to brass-hinged, seasoned wood—is no respecter of either class or regional frontiers. Think on't. I would lay a bet that some frail old biddy in your family has one nestling half-way up the parlour wall of her terraced "back-to-back" (or, depending on the sort of socio-economic variations well catalogued in this journal, her mock-Tudor, detached "des-res").

I can also almost guarantee that you, yourself, possess some alcove, nook or cranny where, in the fullness of time, bereavement and subsequent sibling squabbling, the Aunt Edie Memorial Cupboard could triumphantly be housed.

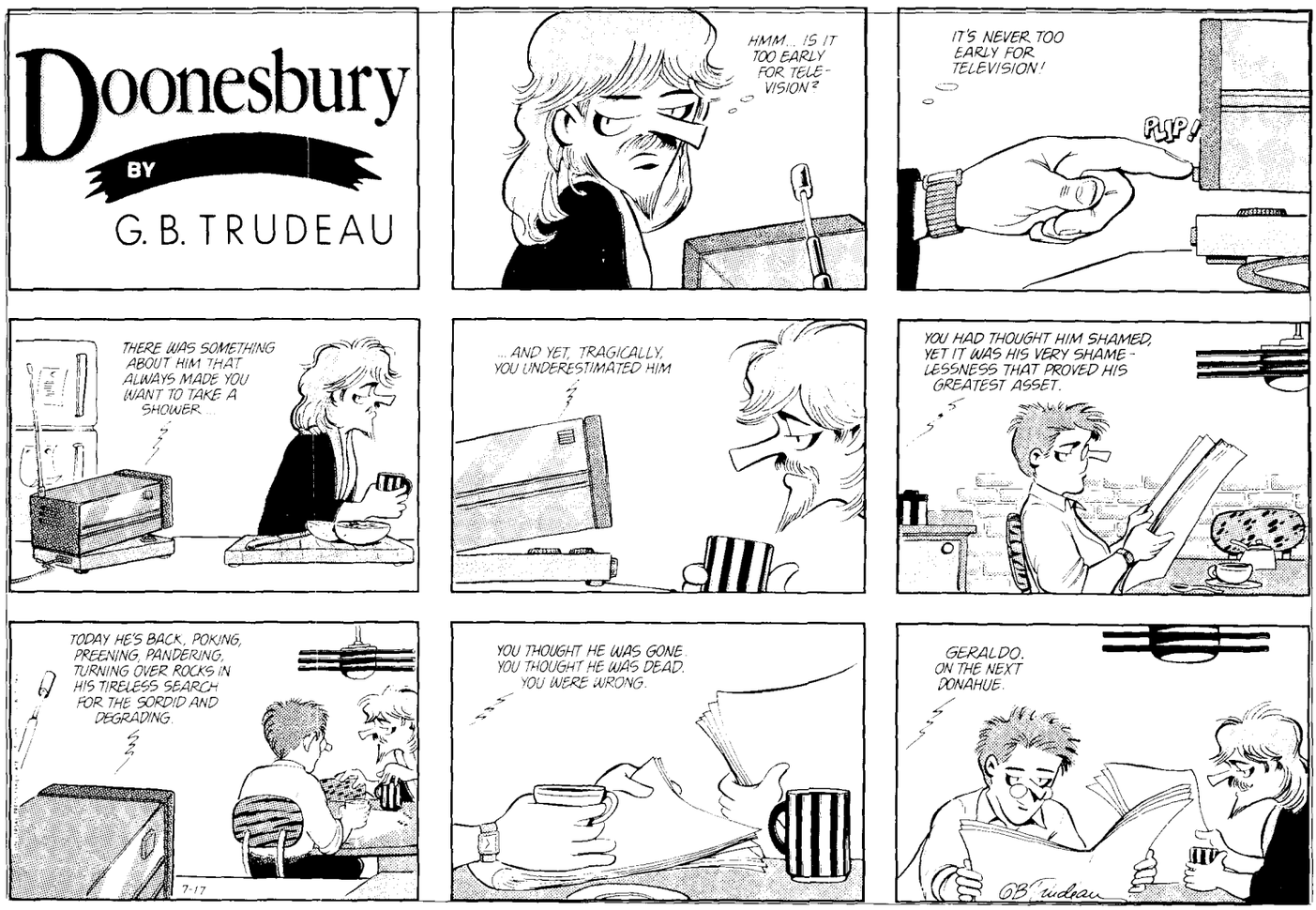
I write with this displeasing certainty of manner, having long observed that the human capacity for sanctimonious greed seldom surfaces more readily than over the John West tinned-salmon sandwiches served at all self-respecting wakes. A cupboard doth make coveters of us all . . .

But let us move on from the creaking corner cabinets, broken ormolu clocks and chipped Staffordshire china spaniels that conspire to arouse litigious, possessive passions amongst mourners who are otherwise entirely numb with grief. Let us now consider the massive moral dilemmas afflicting that bizarre section of the population burdened by unaccountable feelings of *genuine* affection for their kin.

For, devoted though you be to Mam or Dad or Gran, there is no escaping the uneasy-making fact that, if the family homestead is worth a bob or two, then so will *you* be—just the second they snuff it. Your tragic loss is, simultaneously, your rather cheery gain.

But there exists, I think, an altruistic way of salvaging the beneficiary's conscience. When our nearests and dearests finally fall asleep in God's Eternal Garden (in the north of England no one ever *dies*) their properties, encouragingly exempted from all death duty, should be speedily flogged off *at half their actual value to eager first time buyers.* Heirs would still inherit welcome, gentle windfalls and the market would be flooded with bargain basements, mezzanines and attics. Eureka! Easeful death would bequeath the nation's youth accessible house prices!

However, while waiting for this spiffing wheeze to hit the statute book, I bequeath to you a little tip concerning winning ways with wills. The grandmother of a friend took to sticking named labels upon every enticing item she possessed. One single missed or, indeed, unpunctual visit and the offender's name would be ruthlessly struck off, to be replaced by that of a more solicitous relation. She died when she was 90, surrounded by an ever-anxious army of attendants, having spent her final 30 years gleefully Tippexing her pathway to the grave.


Doonesbury
BY
G. B. TRUDEAU
HMM... IS IT TOO EARLY FOR TELE-VISION?
IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY FOR TELEVISION!
PLIP!
THERE WAS SOMETHING ABOUT HIM THAT ALWAYS MADE YOU WANT TO TAKE A SHOWER...
...AND YET, TRAGICALLY, YOU UNDERESTIMATED HIM.
YOU HAD THOUGHT HIM SHAMED, YET IT WAS HIS VERY SHAME-LESSNESS THAT PROVED HIS GREATEST ASSET.
TODAY HE'S BACK, POKING, PREENING, PANDERING, TURNING OVER ROCKS IN HIS TIRELESS SEARCH FOR THE SORDID AND DEGRADING.
7-17
YOU THOUGHT HE WAS GONE. YOU THOUGHT HE WAS DEAD. YOU WERE WRONG.
GERALDO, ON THE NEXT DONAHUE.
GB Trudeau

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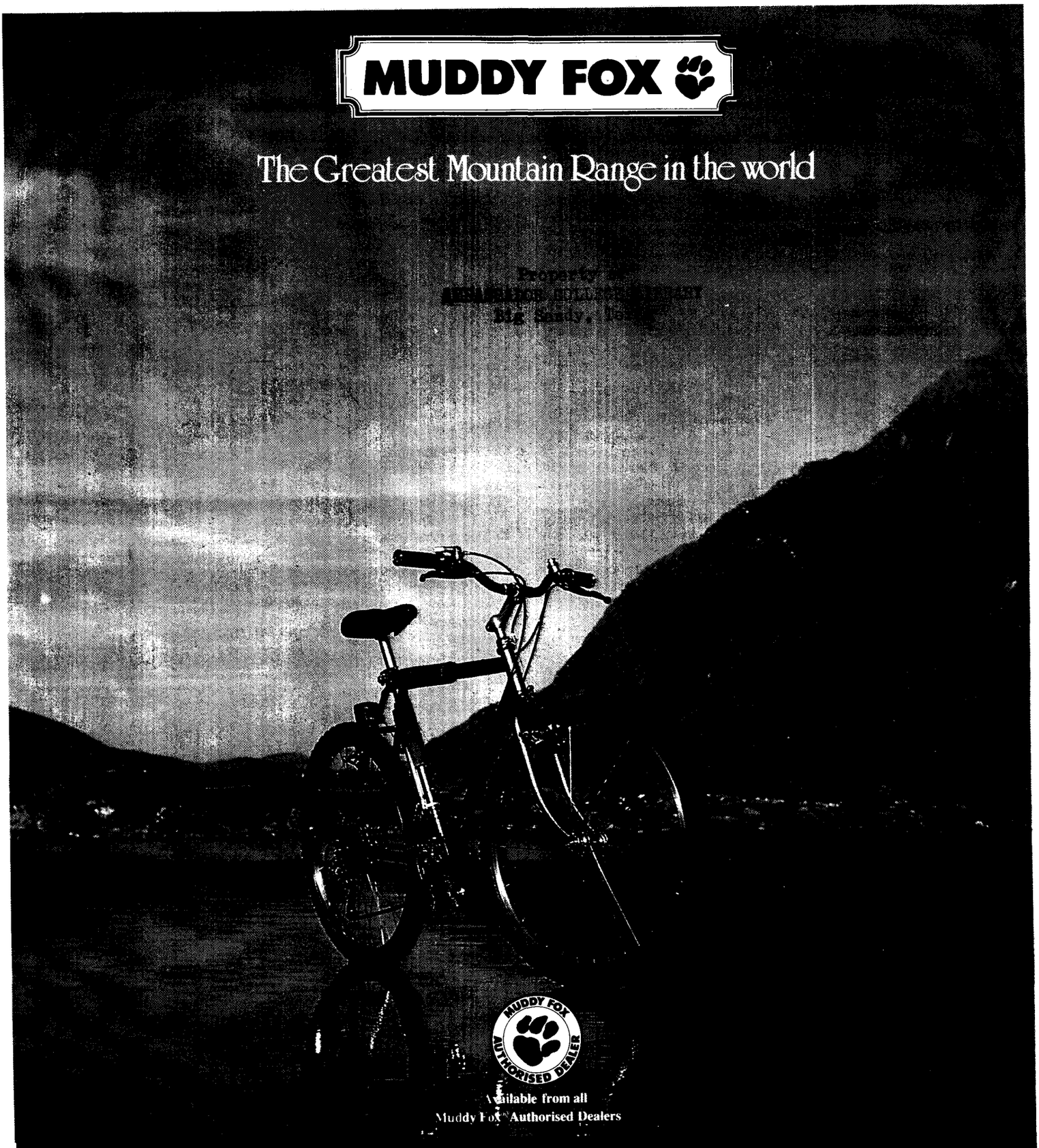
MUDDY FOX

The Greatest Mountain Range in the world

Property of
Big Sandy,



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